

Hafa Adai!

'Touching MVA funds could be catastrophic to recovery efforts' **PAGE 2**

GAIN visits CNMI to establish groundwork for spay/neuter efforts. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

Torres summoned to court; Guam judge to handle case

Gov. Ralph D. L. G. Torres has been summoned to an arraignment hearing on April 25 at the CNMI Superior Court in connection with the case the Office of the Attorney General filed against him for alleged misconduct, theft, and contempt.

During the hearing, Torres will plead guilty or not guilty to the charges against him. Torres will be represented in court by Viola Alepuyo, and Anthony H. Aguon.

The Superior Court clerk of courts first scheduled Torres' arraignment hearing on Monday, April 18, at 9am, but this was later re-



Torres

scheduled to April 25, also at 9am, by judge Alberto E. Tolentino of the Guam Superior Court, who was appointed judge pro tempore to handle the case.

If Torres does not appear on the arranged date, an application may be made for the issuance of a warrant for his arrest.

The criminal case against

Torres was filed by assistant attorney general Robert Glass last Friday, alleging 12 counts of misconduct in public office and one count of theft relating to the issuance of airline tickets for business class, first class, or other premium class travel for himself and/or first lady Diann T. Torres. The case also alleges one count of contempt for failure to appear in compliance with a subpoena.

See **TORRES** on **Page 4**

Bad weather blamed for islandwide power outage

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

The entire island of Saipan was plunged into a power blackout in the early morning hours yesterday due to the bad weather that caused a heavy electrical

fault on a feeder.

A Commonwealth Utilities Corp. post on its Facebook page stated that it experienced a heavy electrical fault on Feeder 1, 2nd Partial at 1:24am yesterday due to the inclement weather.

See **WEATHER** on **Page 4**

ROTA OUTREACH

Northern Marianas College's Criminal Justice chair Clement Bermudes talks to police officers of the Department of Public Safety during NMC's recent visit to Rota. NMC conducted several info sessions on Rota as part of the college's outreach activities for workforce development programs in the CNMI. The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services and high school juniors and seniors were among the other attendees of the workshops. Some of the topics of the workshops were about NMC's Criminal Justice program, benefits of a higher education, and financial aid opportunities.



NMC

Chronicling COVID's ruthless US toll

By ADAM GELLER, CARLA K. JOHNSON and HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the deadliest day of a horrific week in April 2020, COVID took the lives of 816 people in New York City alone.

Lost in the blizzard of pandemic data that's been swirling ever since is the fact that 43-year-old Fernando Morales was one of them.

Two years and nearly 1 million deaths later, his brother,

See **COVID'S** on **Page 4**

Ex-IPI chair Cui is fined \$42,200

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT



Cui

Former Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) L L C chair Cui Li Jie has been fined

\$42,200 for failing to comply with the U.S. District Court's order to preserve what's called electronically stored informa-

tion, or ESI data, that's typi-

See **CUI** on **Page 4**

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE



NATION

Police hunted late into the night for the gunman who opened fire on a subway train in Brooklyn.

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ASIA

The death toll from landslides and floods in the Philippines has risen to at least 56.

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LIFE & STYLE

Timekeeping isn't Rihanna's strong suit and that also goes for her own pregnancy.

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Local

'Touching MVA funds could be catastrophic to recovery efforts'

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) says the Senate is now working on identifying an alternate source of funding to subsidize the over \$2 million needed to give retirees their \$1,000 bonuses without taking what remains of the Marianas Visitors Authority's budget as it could be catastrophic for the CNMI's recovering tourism industry.

In a statement from Hofschneider, he said the Senate, in partnership with the Department of Finance, is looking into alternate sources of funding to fund the long-disputed

retiree bonuses.

"[House Bill 22-95] is before the Senate...and we are working with Secretary of Finance David Atalig on identifying areas within the Executive Branch for possible source of funds. Some of us in the Legislature elect to ignore a mechanism, which is legally permitted, and instead prefers this option that could potentially be catastrophic to our recovery efforts," he said.

Hofschneider explained that the Senate is looking for alternate sources of funding because the House of Rep-



Hofschneider

resentatives' initial proposal to dip into MVA's funding is "reckless," given that the CNMI's tourism industry hasn't fully recovered yet.

"The House proposal to use MVA funds is reckless and the Senate leadership is dumb-founded that, at a time when we are trying to rebuild and restart our tourism industry, some of us in the Legislature have other plans," he said.

Ultimately, the Senate wants to resolve this ongoing issue in a matter that does not jeopardize the progress the tourism industry has made, the

Senate president stated.

"The Senate is poised to resolve this matter once and for all so that our retirees can get their checks soon and without jeopardizing agencies that are crucial and critical during these times," Hofschneider said.

In a previous interview with Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan), she hopes that the House and Senate can soon come together to discuss a resolution

that both parties will agree on so that retirees will finally get their bonuses.

"I still have hope that we can come to the table with our Senate counterparts at some point in the very near future. The House has done its part in passing not just one but two appropriations bills to support the retiree bonus. The House speaker has appointed conferees from the House and we still await action from the Sen-

ate," she said.

In a previous MVA board meeting, the MVA unanimously agreed to oppose House Bill 22-95 that would reprogram over \$850,000 from their budget to fund the retiree bonuses. MVA's concern is that if over \$850,000 is reprogrammed from their budget, they would have no choice but to shut down as this would completely deplete the agency's operations budget.

MVA allocates \$10K for Flame Tree Arts Festival

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

After a two-year hiatus, the annual Flame Tree Arts Festival will return this year and the Marianas Visitors Authority has allocated \$10,000 for the event to show its continuous support for the festivities.

MVA managing director Priscilla Iakopo said during a board meeting last week that the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture has reached out to MVA to inform them that this year's Flame Tree Arts Festival is a go and is looking forward to continuing its partnership with MVA for a successful turnout.

"I received a letter from the Commonwealth Council of Art and Culture. They have actually announced that they will be having the Flame tree Arts Festival this month. MVA

has always joined them in ensuring that the annual Flame Tree Arts Festival is successful and this year, they are actually asking us once again to help them financially with the sponsorship," she said.

After bringing up the CCAC's request with the board, the board unanimously voted to allocate \$10,000 to the event.

"We definitely want to provide them the \$10,000...with funding coming out of marketing recovery program," Iakopo said.

This year's event will be the 41st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival and it will be held on April 29, through May 1 at the Sugar King Park in China Town.

The CCAC is encouraging visual, traditional, and performing artists as well as food vendors to register for the festival before April 29.

Applications are available for

pick up at the Arts Council office on Capital Hill and all food vendor applications are due no later than April 15, 3pm.

The Flame Tree Arts Festival is the CNMI's largest annual festival that celebrates the rich art and cultural heritage of the Commonwealth.

The annual festival puts arts at its finest by featuring a wide selection of artwork from CNMI registered and non-registered artists, traditional or contemporary, using different media and offering varied price ranges to suit everyone's taste and budget.

The event also showcases presentations from local and guest performing groups and musicians, art demonstrations, and an array of different cuisines.

For more information, visit the Arts Council office next to the post office on Capital Hill or call (670) 322-9982.

Look into master's degree options at online UOG fair today

Those considering a master's degree now or in the future will have an opportunity to explore 15 options available at the University of Guam through the university's Graduate Program Recruitment Fair. The fair is open to the public and will take place today, April 14, from 6pm to 8pm, online via Zoom.

The online fair will feature breakout rooms for each of UOG's graduate programs and will provide attendees the opportunity to ask questions to current graduate students and faculty. Financial aid and admissions information will be presented as well, including information on available scholarships and assistantships.

The University of Guam offers the following master's degrees:

- Master of Arts in Counseling
- Master of Arts in English
- Master of Arts in Micronesian Studies
- Master of Arts in Teaching
- Master of Education in Administration and Supervision



Joann C.E. Diego, a program coordinator for the University of Guam's School of Education, provides information on the Master of Education in Reading program to a potential student at the UOG Graduate Program Recruitment Fair in 2018. The fair will take place online this semester today, April 14.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

- Master of Education in Reading (online degree program)
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 - Master of Science in Environmental Science
 - Master of Science in Sustainable Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
 - Professional Master of Business Administration (available on-campus or online)
- To register for the fair, visit <https://bit.ly/uoggradstudiesfair>.
- For more information, contact (671) 735-2205 or graduatestudies@triton.uog.edu. (UOG)

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www.dps.gov.mp

GAIN visits CNMI to establish groundwork for spay/neuter efforts



GAIN

Representatives of the Dog Control programs, Saipan Cares for Animals (Saipan and Tinian chapters), Guam Animals In Need, Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin Aldan, Dr. Brenda Smith, and Dr. Idnacio Dela Cruz.



GAIN

Alison Hadley, executive director of non-profit group Guam Animals In Need; lead animal caretaker Arleen DeCastro; and GAIN spay/neuter veterinarian Dr. Brenda Smith visited both Tinian and Saipan during the week of March 28 to discuss bringing the group's spay/neuter efforts to the CNMI.

GAIN does its best to support Guam's neighboring islands by sending food and supplies when needed, but now aim to take the next step.

"It has always been a goal of mine, as executive director, to bring assistance to the CNMI and its pets that goes beyond providing food," said Hadley. "We want to help the animal control programs and the community as much as possible and we believe the best way to do that is assist in establishing a sustainable spay/neuter program out there."

DeCastro said this is something that the CNMI's leaders have expressed an interest in "and we are excited and happy to help in any way we can."

GAIN met with the Dog Control Program and Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin Aldan and the Dog Control Program and Saipan Mayor David Apatang, as well as Rep. Edwin Propst (D-Saipan), to discuss animal welfare needs and goals, as well as revisiting the CNMI Animal Protection and Control Act, or Public Law No. 21-31, to see how dog program staff may be statutorily authorized to perform procedures that animal shelter staff in Guam are statutorily authorized to perform, like in

many other jurisdictions in the states in the U.S.

"We are very fortunate to have a great relationship with Guam Animals In Need and can work together in improving our capability of providing and delivering better animal healthcare to dogs and cats in Saipan," Apatang said. "It is time to bring how we operate our dog control program to present time practices and move on from old practices."

Aldan stated that "it was a great pleasure to have director Hadley from the Guam Animals In Need shelter visit Tinian and witness firsthand the completion of our dog kennel project. Director Hadley has always been supportive of our Dog Control Program by providing us with supplies and feeds. She is in constant communication with our program manager, Mr. Michael Lee Borja, as they collaborate on ways to promote the adoption of our animals in the shelter."

As the Lynn Raulerson Spay and Neuter Clinic at GAIN continues to move forward with its own spay/neuter efforts in Guam, GAIN will maintain close contact with Tinian and Saipan to stay focused on bringing spay/neuter efforts to the CNMI as soon as possible. GAIN also aims to bring Rota into the loop and take this next animal welfare step together.

For more information about the Lynn Raulerson Spay and Neuter Clinic at GAIN, or to sign up on the surgery waiting list, you can visit: <https://www.snipclinicguam.com/> (PR)

Rep. Ed Propst (D-Saipan), Tinian and Saipan Dog Control programs, Henry Hofschneider of the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, Dr. Brenda Smith, and GAIN.



GAIN

Representatives of the Tinian and Saipan Dog Control programs, Saipan Mayor David Apatang, Henry Hofschneider of the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, Dr. Brenda Smith, and GAIN.



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Reconstruction of Sugar Dock to begin in January

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The project to reconstruct the Sugar Dock, or *Bantalan*, is anticipated to begin in January 2023.

To spread more information about it, Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan) and Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan) hosted a community meeting at the Sugar Dock in Chalan Kanoa yesterday and shared where project managers are at in terms of the architecture and engineering design and to get feedback from the community.

"There's a lot of things happening in this area, a lot of exciting developments. As many people know, Sugar Dock is a very beloved part of the island, it's very popular for families, fishermen, and even divers. So we really want enhance, and make it an even more enjoyable place," Rep. Tina Sablan said.

She said that, with the current progress the project has been making, they expect the project to begin sometime in January 2023.

"Rep. JP and I have been following up the status of this environmental assessment project for a while now and now we're at 50%. I just had a conversation with the engineer and the secretary of Public Works, that the target date for construction to begin is January. This stage is really important because we want to get community feed-

back," she said.

Rep. Tina Sablan said the project is partially funded by an appropriation from the Saipan Northern Island Legislative Delegation.

"The funding, at least for part of the reconstruction, was already appropriated by the Saipan Northern Island Legislative Delegation. There were a couple of appropriation bills that passed in the 20th Legislature," she said.

The scope of the project includes completely tearing down the existing dock and constructing a new one, and the construction of a functional boat launching ramp.

"The project is being managed by the Department of Public Works and the proposal right now is to tear down the current structure, which is very unsafe, and mitigate that hazard before we construct a new dock. We will be using the same footprint so that boaters will be able to use it. We also want to make the boat launching ramp functional again for boaters and fishermen. As you can see, it's covered over with sand. Part of the proposal is to dredge this area so that boaters can use it," she said.

In addition, Sablan said she wants to work with the Historic Preservation Office to figure out a way to showcase the Sugar Dock as a historic site as it is registered as one.

"Many people know that

Governmental Operations' subpoena on Dec. 10, 2021. Torres has already filed suit to contest the power of the committee to subpoena him. A decision in the matter is expected soon.

Following the criminal charge filed against Torres, five Superior Court judges have recused themselves from hearing the criminal case.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto Naraja, and associate judges Joseph Camacho, Kenneth Govendo, Teresa Kim-Tenorio, and Wesley Bogdan all issued orders of recusal on Monday, leading to Monday's appointment of Tolentino to sit on the Commonwealth Superior Court in this matter.

"A party shall file a motion to disqualify within 10 days from the date of the order should they believe that reasonable grounds exist for the judge pro tempore to be disqualified. Unless the motion to disqualify is granted, judge pro tempore Alberto E. Tolentino shall have full authority in this matter and shall carry out the duties and powers inherent with the appointment," said Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro in his order of appointment.



IVA MAURIN

Part of the project is to make the boat launching ramp functional again for boaters and fishermen. Part of the proposal is to dredge this area so that boaters can use it.

this pool area is a historic site, the dock itself is nationally registered as a historic site. I

would like to work with the Historic Preservation Office and people who know and

love the history of this place, for a way to showcase that history so that community mem-

bers, children, and visitors can learn about how special Sugar Dock is," she said.

COVID'S

From Page 1

Adam Almonte, fingers Morales' bass guitar and visualizes him playing tunes. In a park overlooking the Hudson River, he recalls long-ago days tossing a baseball with Morales.

"When he passed away it was like I lost a brother, a parent and a friend all at the same time," says Almonte, 16 years younger than Morales, who shared his love of books, video games and wrestling, and worked for the city processing teachers' pensions.

If losing one person leaves such a lasting void, consider all that's been lost with the deaths of 1 million.

In the next few weeks the U.S. toll from the coronavirus will likely surpass that once unthinkable milestone.

The pandemic has left an estimated 194,000 children in the U.S. without one or both of their parents. It has deprived communities of leaders, teachers and caregivers. It has robbed us of expertise and persistence, humor and devotion.

Through wave after wave,

the virus has compiled a merciless chronology of loss—one by one by one.

When it began, the threat hadn't yet come into focus. In February 2020, an unfamiliar respiratory illness started spreading through a nursing home outside Seattle, the Life Care Center of Kirkland.

Neil Lawyer, 84, was a short-term patient there, recovering after hospitalization for an infection. When he died of COVID-19 on March 8, the U.S. toll stood at 30.

Lawyer, born on a Mississipp-

pi farm to parents whose mixed-race heritage subjected them to bitter discrimination, was the family's first college graduate.

Trained as a chemist, he lived and worked in Belgium for more than two decades. Fellow expats knew him for his devotion to coaching baseball and for his rich baritone.

After Lawyer—known to family as "Moose"—and his wife retired to Bellevue, Washington, he and other family members would serenade couples at their weddings in an ensemble dubbed the Moose-Tones.

TORRES

From Page 1

Matters of a similar nature are also the subject of an impeachment complaint that the CNMI House of Representatives has submitted to the CNMI Senate. The House has already impeached Torres and the Senate is now set to conduct a trial in the matter. If the impeachment matter prevails, Torres could be ousted from his post.

As for the OAG complaint against Torres, the first two counts of misconduct in public office go back to April 12, 2018, when Torres allegedly issued himself and his wife first-class airline tickets paid for by local funds.

Torres allegedly repeated these violations on June 8, July 11, Aug. 13, Aug. 16, Sept. 25, Nov. 15, Nov. 27, and Dec. 18, 2018, making up the remaining 10 counts of misconduct in public office.

Aside from 12 counts of misconduct, the OAG also charged Torres with theft for the same violations.

Lastly, the OAG is accusing Torres of contempt for his failure to comply with the House Committee on Judiciary &

CUI

From Page 1

cally stored in smartphones and other electronic devices.

Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ordered Cui on Monday to pay \$42,200 to the U.S. District Court clerk no later than Monday, April 25.

Cui, who is considered a third-party witness in the labor case of Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC, was found in contempt during a hearing last year in Decem-

ber "for failing to comply with the court's preservation order on ESI data and imposed a daily per diem sanction of \$200 starting on Dec. 23, 2021," as stated in court documents.

During a status conference on Dec. 29, 2021, the court increased Cui's per diem sanction to \$1,000 starting on Dec. 30, 2021, until Cui purged her contempt just this year on March 10.

The total owed based on the court's calculations is \$42,200; however, Cui "contends that the total sanctions

owed is \$36,200."

From Dec. 23, 2021, to Dec. 28, 2021, which is six days, with \$200 owed per day, this totals \$1,200. From Dec. 29, 2021, to Feb. 7, 2022, for a total of 41 days and \$1,000 each day, Cui owes \$41,000, for an overall total of \$42,200.

Cui is a third-party witness in the lawsuit of the seven construction workers against IPI and its former contractor and subcontractor, MCC International and Gold Mantis Construction Decoration, both

of which have already settled with the plaintiffs.

The plaintiffs are Tianming Wang, Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Qingchun Xu, and Duxin Yan. They are alleging labor abuses and human trafficking. They are represented by Aaron Halegua and Bruce Berline.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the plaintiffs previously accused Cui of violating the contempt order issued by the court in the lawsuit of the seven workers.

WEATHER

From Page 1

It said the fault caused an electrical surge, which tripped the Power Plant 1 station service and the Aggreko Plant, causing a generator overload at Power Plant 1 that triggered the generator protective devices at the facility, resulting in an islandwide power outage.

Power generation staff immediately assessed the conditions at the power plant and

initiated restarting procedures once it was determined that it was all clear.

"CUC line crew were able to isolate the problem and make the necessary repairs to re-energize the feeder circuits to full restoration at different times starting from 2:37am to 4:15am," the CUC post said.

In a later interview with CUC executive director Gary Camacho about the power interruption, he said, "We're going to make the necessary

adjustments, and we'll continue to do that. It's unfortunate, but we're happy knowing that nobody was hurt, as this was a very dangerous situation."

"In addition, we're very fortunate to have highly skilled and qualified people at the power plants, performing all the work necessary to be able to quickly re-energize the system. I'm very pleased with the work of the staff, and I'm very happy with the fact that we have a lot of highly qualified

people in CUC ensuring that we minimize all interruption."

CUC customers in the areas of As Gonno, Koblerville, Afetnas, San Antonio, Chalan Piao, Chalan Kanoa, Susupe, Oleai and San Jose will be experiencing low pressure to no water as CUC water operations personnel works toward finding the cause of the Isley TSA issue. Customers are advised to conserve water during this outage until services are fully restored.

\$36M contract awarded to support flow of Marines to Guam

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM—Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific has awarded a \$36 million firm-fixed price task order under a multiple award construction contract to Hensel Phelps Construction Co. of Honolulu, Hawaii for the construction of a principal end item warehouse at U.S. Naval Support Activity, Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz in Guam.

"This facility will construct operational vehicle warehouse in support of Marine Air-Ground Task Force at [Camp Blaz]," said NAVFAC Pacific Design and Construction program manager Mark Nakagawa. "Currently there are not enough adequate operational, maintenance, or support facilities including PEI warehouse facilities for the MAGTF to conduct required operational and training tasks. This new facility will bring this capabilities to MAGTF and [Camp Blaz] to support the force flow of the Marines to Guam."

The work to be performed provides for the construction of a principal end item warehouse for the storage of operational military vehicles. Site preparation to include

clearing, grubbing, green waste recycling, and earthwork. Other associated work

to include paving and site improvements with asphaltic concrete roadway and vehi-

cle staging areas, landscaping, trash enclosure, fencing, gates, bollards and concrete

retaining walls.

"The successful award of this project is the direct result of the collaborative efforts from our project stakehold-

ers," said Nakagawa.

Work will be performed in Finegayan, Guam, with an expected completion date of July 2024. (PR)

Bernadette Valencia joins UOG as regent

Bernadette "Bernie" Valencia was sworn in on Feb. 24, 2022, to serve on the University of Guam board of regents. She replaces former regent Father Francis X. Hezel and will serve a full six-year term until January 2028.

Valencia is the vice president of Hawaii sales for Matson Navigation Inc. She began her career at Matson in 2008 as the regional sales manager and was later promoted to general manager in 2013, where she led the company's strategic plan to expand and establish a new service route to Okinawa, Japan. In 2017, she was promoted to vice president for the Guam, Micronesia, and Okinawa region.

After earning her bachelor's in aviation maintenance from San Jose State University (Calif.) in 1993, Valencia worked as an airframe and powerplant mechanic for then-Continental Air Micronesia. She joined Mobil Oil Guam and Micronesia Inc. in 1994 and moved up the corporate ladder throughout her 14-year career with the company. In 2009, she co-founded iCAN Resources Inc., a nonprofit organization that aims to provide training and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Guam.

She has won several awards throughout her career, including the 2020 Supply & Demand Chain Executive Women in Supply Chain Award, the 2018 Guam Business Magazine Executive of the Year, and the 2010 Matson Presidential Award. (PR)

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Garapan Revitalization Task Force to unveil its plans to the public

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Garapan Revitalization Task Force under the Office of Planning and Development, Office of the Governor, will be hosting a community outreach event this Thursday.

On April 14, at around 5pm, the task force will be presenting its preliminary plans and designs for the Garapan revitalization project at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center and it will be open to the public.

“We are currently in [the architecture and engineering] design phase for the ongoing Garapan Revitalization Project, and would like to present our preliminary plans and designs to the public,” said task force chair and Office of Planning and Development deputy direc-

tor Christopher A. Concepcion.

Those preliminary plans including repaving of Garapan’s main street, adding accessible walkways, and plans to improve the overall aesthetic of the heart of Saipan.

“We will repave Garapan Core streets, add sidewalks, curbs, lighting, landscaping, and will maximize on-street parking within the public rights of way. We are excited about the future of the Garapan Core, and we invite the community to attend this informative event. In particular, we invite landowners and members of the business community who are located within the core to attend, since this project will benefit them directly,” he said.

The Garapan Revitalization Project is an effort to reinvigorate the heart of the tourism industry in the Commonwealth

and Concepcion would like to thank the Economic Development Administration under the U.S. Department of Commerce for its help in funding the project.

“This project is fully funded by the Economic Development Administration under the U.S. Department of Commerce. We extend our sincere thanks for their support,” he said.

The Garapan Revitalization Plan, under which this project was conceived, aims to transform Garapan into a premier family-friendly destination, featuring a wide range of shopping, dining, entertainment, civic and commercial uses in a world-class beach resort setting that is attractive for visitors and residents.

For more information, call (670) 233-2673, email garapan@opd.gov.mp or visit them online at opd.gov.mp.

Grijalva, delegates make bipartisan GAO request to identify data collection gaps for US territories

WASHINGTON D.C.—U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee chair Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) and the delegates of the five U.S. territories—American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands—sent a request last week to the U.S. Government Accountability Office o examine gaps in federal agency data collection for the territories. The request also asks GAO to determine the impact of those gaps on federal funding for the territories and to make policy recommendations.


The full letter is available here: <https://bit.ly/37aQoz7>

In the letter, the lawmakers point out that shortcomings in federal agency’s data collection efforts for the U.S. territories have already had long-term impacts. Without reliable population, economic, labor force and agricultural data, the territories have been underfunded and underrepresented in certain federal programs. Complicating data collection efforts further, GAO reported last year that natural disasters, which have been especially devastating in the U.S. territories, and the COVID-19

pandemic created additional obstacles for data collection during the 2020 Census.

“Current and complete information is essential to good decision-making. ...Improving the government’s capacity for collection and analysis of data is critical in understanding issues related to the U.S. territories,” the authors write.

The letter was signed by Grijalva, Rep. Gregorio Sablan (Ind-MP), Rep. Michael San Nicolas (D-GU), Rep. Stacey Plaskett (D-USVI), Rep. Jenniffer González-Colon (R-PRo), and Rep. Aumua Amata Radewagen (R-AS). **(PR)**



Commonwealth Judiciary Administrative Office

Guma’ Hustisia / Iimwal Aweewe / House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 • Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9700/9800 • Facsimile: (670) 236-9702 • Website: www.NMIJudiciary.com

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL I
Announcement # JVA22-024
On the island of SAIPAN

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Chief Justice and under the direct of the Chief Marshal in the Marshal Service Division on Saipan which involves the enforcement and execution of judicial orders and assigned law enforcement duties. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Perform general court security duties, including providing safety and security during judicial proceedings, maintaining order in the courtroom and during prisoner processing, providing protection from harm and personal injury to assigned justices, judges, court personnel, clients, jurors and witnesses;
- Provide protection from damage and vandalism to the court facilities, equipment, and other related resources;
- Assist with all necessary inspection and screening of persons and items entering the court facilities, restricting from entry those that are prohibited within the court premises;
- Provide physical and electronic security monitoring of all assigned areas under the control of the Marshals Service Division;
- Provide Protective Service Detail (PSD) personal security for all justices and judges on official business outside the court premises;
- Assist in transporting and escorting prisoners and other detainees who are awaiting court appearance. This includes transporting prisoners to and from the Department of Corrections (or from other locations as instructed) and the courthouse; to and from the courthouse holding cells and the courtrooms;
- Assist in protecting and transporting jurors and other court personnel during jury trial and deliberation;
- Assist with court bailiff functions, community policing, community supervision, compliance checks;
- Assist in the preparation of reports of service and no-service, including submission of daily activity and incident reports;
- Provide the general public with direction and general information on all judicial service locations with the courthouse;
- Provides assistance to superiors and other law enforcement personnel, particularly in operations, dispatching information;
- Prepares official reports with clarity and completeness on reports submitted to supervisors during the duty shift;
- Coordinates incoming requests for service at the Marshals Service Division and dispatch personnel in an efficient manner which will serve the public;
- Ensure proper handling and disposition of all in-custody prisoners/detainees; provide security, enforcement of established rules and regulations and others, which are provided herein. This critical task requires Deputies to escort prisoners/defendants to hearings as directed;
- Assists in all phases of law enforcement operations, including conducting investigations related criminal cases and or complaints of alleged violation of law, rules, and regulations filed with the Judiciary;
- Serves summons subpoenas and other official documents;
- Examines files and secures evidence and records as required;
- Serves warrants for arrests, searches, and seizures as necessary;
- Possess skills necessary for the use of and care of firearms, and performs and enforces the CNMI Weapons Control Act and Federal Firearms Regulations. Applicant is required to pass either a CNMI Law Enforcement or Federal Firearms Certification course and meet the criteria for annual firearms qualification to carry firearms under the Marshals Service Division Firearms Standard Operating Procedures;
- Must meet the physical fitness and agility requirements testing standards approved by the Chief Marshal or designee;
- Attends and successfully completes all training courses as directed by the Chief Marshal, including but not limited to, any law enforcement officers training courses offered through the Northern Marianas College, local law enforcement and Federal law enforcement agencies;
- Assists the other Deputy Marshals in their duties; and
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

Candidate must a high school diploma or equivalent. Must also satisfy a minimum of two (2) years of experience in law enforcement; or one-year college level education in criminal justice or related field of study.

Law Enforcement Academy Training Preferred, but not required.

Successful candidates must complete and pass law enforcement training, including firearms qualification, during the probationary period.

Military experience may be considered; successful candidates with only military background must complete additional law enforcement training during the probationary period.

Must have the ability to maintain and control sensitive and confidential information, maintain professional records, and uphold office policies.

Candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Must have a valid drivers' license and operate a court vehicle. Criminal background check will be conducted. Applicants with criminal records will not be considered. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and served at the pleasure of the Chief Justice. The salary range will be \$20,000 - \$22,000 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS PERSONS Application forms are available at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Kotten Tinian and Centron Hustisia in Rota during normal business hours except on weekends and holidays. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:


NMI Judiciary
Human Resources
Guma’ Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670) 236-9818 I Cell. (670) 783-8592
hrjudiciary@NMIJudiciary.com

This job announcement will remain open until filled and can be seen and a printable copy of the application downloaded at <http://www.nmijudiciary.gov>

The Judiciary reserves the right to rescind or cancel this JVA at any time without notice.

This position is supported, in whole or in part, by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, CNMI award number CNMI22004, awarded to the CNMI Judiciary by the CNMI Department of Finance.

THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.



Commonwealth Judiciary Administrative Office

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY CLERK I
Announcement # JVA22-023
Office of the Clerk of Court
Superior Court
SAIPAN

DUTIES: This position is under the general supervision of the Presiding Judge and the direct supervision of the Clerk of Court or his/her designee. The employee performs work in accordance with established policies, practices, and court procedures. The following are required duties:

- Receives, reviews, and records documents filed for hearings;
- Provides data entry of pleadings onto the court's case management system;
- Provides daily updates of pleadings and other caseload information for the assigned judge through the court's automated processes, including, but not limited to, the document imaging and online filing system;
- Assesses fines, receives and accounts for monies, issues receipts, prepares deposit slips and provides disbursements per court order or requests from customer service window;
- Prepares and maintains physical and electronic file folders for court cases, including tracking of all pleadings associated with individual cases files;
- Serves as a courtroom clerk when court hearings are in session, including, but not limited to, swearing in of witnesses, logging of all admitted exhibits, tracking all phases of a hearing on an index sheet for the recording counter, operating the electronic recording equipment, and providing continuous monitoring of the recording equipment to ensure the integrity of the record; and,
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:
Must have a high school diploma or equivalent;

Must have a minimum of three (3) years related work experience. There is a strong preference for those with work experience in the legal field or for those with a Bachelor's Degree.

Must have the ability to maintain and control sensitive and confidential information, maintain professional records, and uphold office policies. Must be proficient with Microsoft Word and Excel.

Candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Must have a valid drivers' license and operate a court vehicle. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment. "Illegal drug" means a substance whose use or possession is controlled by

federal law but that is not being used or possessed under the supervision of a licensed health care professional. (Controlled substances are listed in Schedules I-V of 21 C.F.R. Part 1308.)

Education completed in foreign colleges or universities may be used to meet the job qualification requirements if the applicant can show that foreign education is comparable to education received in accredited educational institutions in the United States.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide such evidence when applying for Judiciary jobs. Education received in foreign colleges or universities will be considered if the candidate submits an evaluation of the coursework from: (a) an accredited U.S. college or university; or (b) a private professional organization specializing in interpretation of foreign educational credentials.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. The salary range will be \$20,485 - \$23,625 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS Application forms are available at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Kotten Tinian and Centron Hustisia in Rota during normal business hours except on weekends and holidays. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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hrjudiciary@NMIJudiciary.com

This job announcement will remain open until filled and can be seen and a printable copy of the application downloaded at <http://www.nmijudiciary.gov>

The Judiciary reserves the right to rescind or cancel this JVA at any time without notice.

This position is supported, in whole or in part, by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, CNMI award number CNMI22004, awarded to the CNMI Judiciary by the CNMI Department of Finance

THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

The following organizations evaluate foreign educational credentials for employment and other purposes. All operate on a fee based on the extent of the education to be evaluated; applicants shall bear the cost of evaluation.

(a) Credentials Evaluation Service P.O. Box 24679 Los Angeles, CA 90024

(b) Education Equivalency Evaluation World Education Services P.O. Box 745 Old Chelsea Station New York, NY 10011

(c) Education Credential Evaluators, Inc. P.O. Box 17499 Milwaukee, WI 53217

(d) International Consultants of Delaware, Inc. 914 Pickett Lane Newark, DE 19711

(e) Foundation for International Services, Inc. P.O. Box 230278 Portland, OR 97223.

While the Judiciary offer these addresses as information to applicants who request assistance in obtaining an evaluation of foreign education, these services are not preferred over others which may exist.

CEDA appoints its first economic development manager

» Dave Guerrero to lead economic development efforts for the Marianas

The Commonwealth Economic Development Authority's board of directors announced yesterday the hiring of the agency's first Economic Development Manager. Dave Guerrero will be joining CEDA from First Hawaiian Bank on Saipan, where he serves as the bank's assistant vice president - Commercial Banking Officer.

The EDM role is a specialized position created as a result of Public Law 22-1, which transformed the Commonwealth Development Authority into CEDA, the government agency tasked with generating investments and driving economic development for the Marianas. The law designated CEDA as the CNMI's lead agency for economic development and will ensure that additional tools and funding are provided for the specific purposes of attracting, retaining, and expanding foreign private sector investments in the CNMI.

"We added another important milestone in the Commonwealth's history with the naming of a new EDM," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. "Dave's role will be to lead efforts to attract the right investors, work with the Legislature, agencies, and stakeholders to improve our destination to make the CNMI more attractive to investors, create opportunities for economic diversity, and utilize his extensive experience in finance to help the CNMI fast-track its recovery."

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios congratulated CEDA on appointing Guerrero to lead economic development efforts. "As we work toward a stronger economic future, the Marianas has made a strategic move by appointing a dedicated economic development manager. Dave will lead the charge with a deep understanding of what it takes to establish a sustainable business and how businesses can do that successfully in the Commonwealth," Palacios said.

CEDA board chair Aubry Hocog said the board looks forward to building the agency's strategic plan with Guerrero. Their first order of business is to assess the current state of the economy and develop the diversification plan, which will be presented to Torres. Hocog noted that the CNMI relies heavily on one industry—tourism. She says the Commonwealth needs to expand and welcome diverse industries and investors to rebuild the economy.

"Under the new legislation, CEDA has the opportunity to

be flexible with these changing times. We are ready to get to work to diversify the CNMI's portfolio," she said. "It will take teamwork to get there. With Dave's impressive background, we are confident that we can create a plan that will ultimately benefit our community."

CEDA executive director Manuel A. Sablan echoes Hocog's sentiments, noting that Guerrero's credentials, private-sector experience, and deep understanding of economic development will help to lay a strong foundation for CEDA.

"Dave will help us to zero in on what is needed to bring in development and investments for the CNMI. We will begin by laying out a multi-year plan and identify the funding to make it a reality," he added.

Economic development manager

Guerrero, who was raised on Saipan, will officially join CEDA on April 18 and will work with the board of directors and the executive direc-

tor to identify and secure investments for the CNMI locally and abroad.

Guerrero holds a master's degree in economics from California State University, East Bay. In addition to FHB, he has also worked at various stateside and local financial institutions: Wells Fargo at its headquarters in San Francisco, California; Franklin Templeton Financial Services Corp.; and Bank of Guam. Guerrero has been in the finance industry for more than 15 years specializing in anti-money laundering, fraud, compliance, operations, sales, loans, and investments.

"When I was preparing for college, I decided on economics as an area of study because I knew it could one day help our islands," Guerrero said. "I am looking forward to bringing my years of experience to serve the people of the Marianas. My personal goal is to improve our standard of living through sustainable business



Guerrero

opportunities for our people, which will, in turn, create more jobs and ultimately lead to a stronger economy."

Guerrero also serves as the board member-treasurer for 500 Sails and board member-treasurer for Mariana Islands Nature Alliance. He is an active member of the Rotary Club of Saipan - District 2750 and served four years on the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, representing Saipan.

"As the first in this role, I face uncharted territory. I see my role as someone who will bring the right people together to accomplish our shared mission. I'll be talking to a lot of people, seeing what can work, evaluating risks, and filling gaps. It must be a win-win for the CNMI and investors. I thank the board for their confidence in me and look forward to working with them to make the Marianas better for us all," he said.

Public warned of high surf, rip currents

A high surf advisory remains in effect until 6am Saturday along west facing reefs. There is also a high risk of rip currents through Friday night along west facing reefs.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large breaking waves of 9 to

11 feet could increase to 10 to 12 by Thursday along west facing reefs of Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan through Friday night.

This will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water. These west swells are being caused by

fresh to strong monsoon flow and Typhoon Malakas.

The public is advised to stay out of the water along west facing reefs. Elsewhere, swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. (PR)

GCEA supports CEDA's mission

"Mr. Guerrero's appointment is another positive step for the Marianas," said Jerry Tan, co-chairman of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers. "In 2020 when the council recommended that the CDA evolve into CEDA, we knew this was the key to attracting quality investors and new industries to the islands."

Tan noted that Guerrero's

appointment comes at the perfect time as the Marianas is reopening and rebuilding after many tough years. "The Commonwealth is ready to build its economic future. Our residents have endured so much, and this is the time to be proactive and strategic. (PR)

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Board of Directors
Personnel and Operations Committees

REVISED PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that on **Monday, April 18, 2022**, the Personnel Standing Committee and the CUC Human Resources Office ("HRO") will present an updated CUC Human Resources Rules and Regulations from **9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** and the Operations Standing Committee will tour the CUC facilities in Tinian from **12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

On **Tuesday, April 19, 2022**, the Operations Standing Committee will hold a status conference at the Tinian Mayor's Office

AGENDA*

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
- II. Public Comments**
- III. Status Conference
 1. Updates by Personnel Committee and Human Resources Office
 2. Tour
 3. Meet and Greet
 4. Update on Tinian's Current and Forthcoming Projects
- IV. Executive Session***
- V. Announcements
- VI. Adjournment

* In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional Agenda items may be added to the above listing only by a recorded vote of the majority members of the governing body.

** All interested persons are welcome to attend and submit written and oral testimony on the above Agenda items. Public Comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three (3) minutes.

*** Pursuant to 1 CMC §9912, the CUC Board of Directors may vote to meet at any time in executive session, in consultation with the Legal Counsel on matters deemed privileged and confidential.

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■ **Thursday, April 21st** 9:00am - 4:00pm
 ■ **Friday, April 22nd** 9:00am - 4:00pm
 at Marianas Medical Center in Garapan



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Jennifer Ross, BC-HIS
 Board Certified in Hearing
 Instrument Sciences
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Opinion

Hafa Adai! Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Ending federal pot prohibition is a no-brainer

Last week, the House of Representatives voted 220-204 to approve the MORE Act, which would end the federal prohibition of marijuana. While the bill certainly isn't perfect, it's preferable to prohibition, which is why it's unfortunate that only one California Republican member of Congress, Rep. Tom McClintock, voted in support.

For decades, the United States federal government has waged a losing battle against marijuana.

Most American adults have tried marijuana despite the best efforts of the government—which has entailed the arrest of millions of Americans, including several hundreds of thousands per year, countless raids and international interdiction efforts.

The failure of marijuana prohibition is of course no surprise. It's going as well as alcohol prohibition a century ago, which is what most people understand at this point.

According to consistent public polling in recent years, most Americans support legalizing marijuana, which remains prohibited under federal law even as increasing numbers of states legalize it for medicinal and recreational purposes.

This past November, 68% of Americans surveyed by Gallup indicated support for legalization.

California, of course, has been a pioneer of marijuana law reform.

Medical marijuana has been legal here since voters approved Proposition 215 in 1996, and recreational marijuana was legalized following passage of Proposition 64 in 2016.

Though the federal government hasn't shown as much interest in meddling with states that are going contrary to federal law, the contradiction is untenable.

Since federal marijuana prohibition is nonsensical, unjustifiable and harmful, that should be reason enough to strike prohibition and allow states to make their own laws about how to manage it.

Add in where public sentiment is at and it's a no-brainer.

The MORE Act gets us there by striking marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act and decriminalizing related offenses. It also rightly puts forth processes for people convicted of federal marijuana offenses to clear their records.

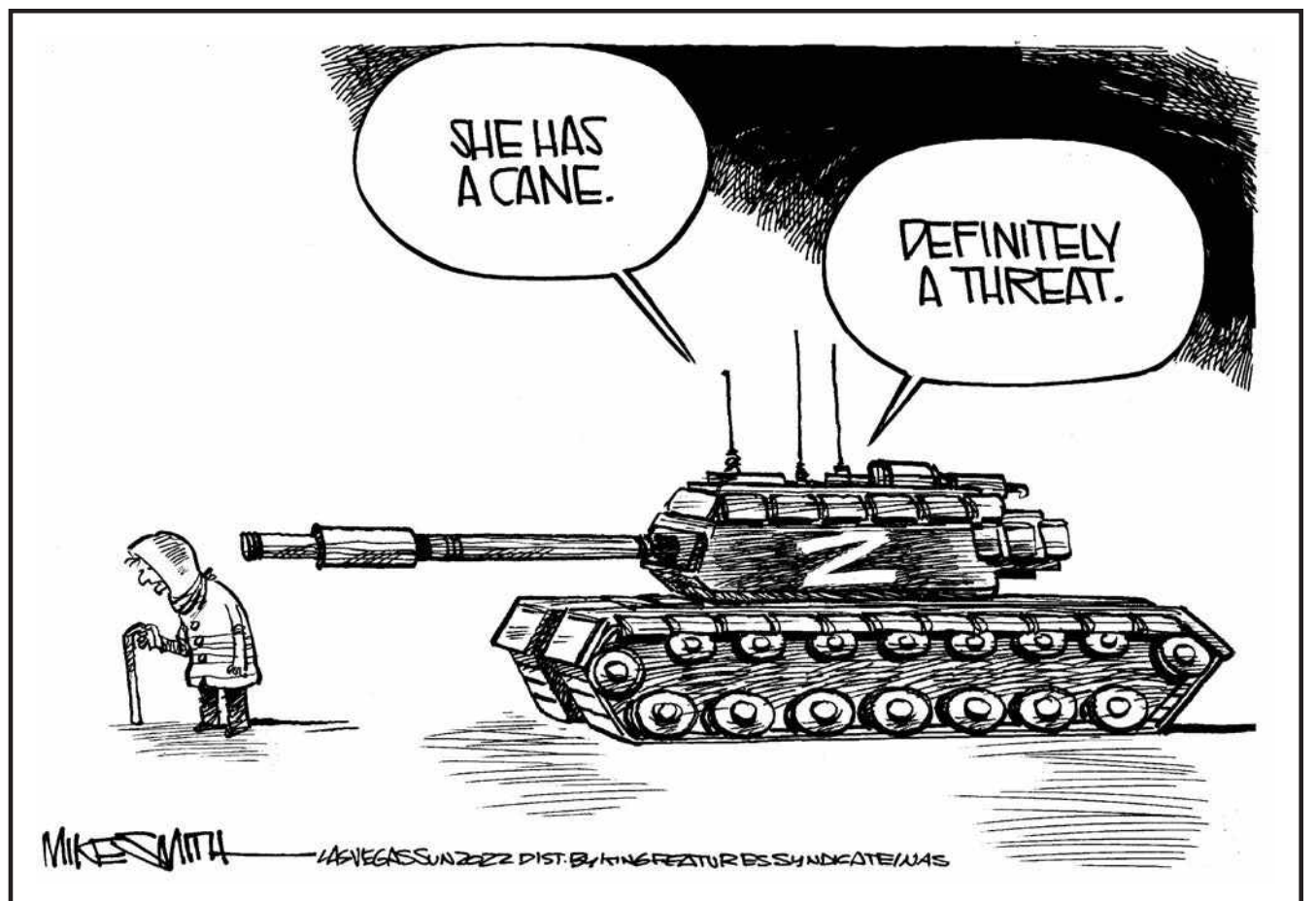
While we're not especially thrilled that the proposal calls for various federal taxes, the end of marijuana prohibition is long overdue.

While votes in opposition from many members of the California Republican delegation don't surprise us—Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Temecula, for example, has consistently told us about his opposition—we're disappointed that Rep. Michelle Steel, R-Huntington Beach, voted against it.

Steel told our editorial board in October 2020 that despite her personal opposition to marijuana use, she "would support the removal of marijuana from Schedule I and giving the states and their respective local governments the ability to find the marijuana policies that work best for them."

Federal marijuana prohibition has been a failure. Supporting efforts to end it should be a no-brainer.

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The dangerous thread connecting avian flu, COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine

As former elected officials from Midwestern states, we are heartsick watching farmers across the region destroy millions of chickens infected with highly pathogenic avian influenza because, frankly, they have no other choice.

The last time this disease struck the United States in 2015, our country detected infections in 21 states, spent \$879 million to respond to the epidemic and depopulated more than 50 million birds on 232 farms. The total estimated cost to the U.S. economy was \$3.3 billion. Seven years later, our country still seems unable to do much more than respond by culling large numbers of birds again, costing farmers dearly and driving up the cost of food at a time when inflation is already at a record high.

Avian influenza and COVID-19 painfully remind us of how disruptive and destructive biological events can be to our public health, economy and national security. And now the Russian invasion of Ukraine is yet another stark reminder of how our adversaries may use biological weapons to attack humanity.

We are both privileged to serve on the Bipartisan Commission on Biodefense, an organization that identifies gaps in the federal government's ability to defend the nation against biological threats. The commission has been making recommendations to Congress and the White House to eliminate gaps in national biodefense for seven years.

Our commission understood the danger biological threats posed when the commission held its first meeting in 2014. These threats are only increasing today and will continue to increase in the future unless the administration and Congress act immediately.

The spread of avian influenza and the continuation of COVID-19 show how two simultaneously occurring diseases can create a layered crisis. However, we cannot afford to focus on just these two diseases to the exclusion of all other biological threats. While the current decrease in COVID-19 infections brings hope, the next variant of the coronavirus that causes SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome; another emerging infectious disease; laboratory mishap; or biological attack could be right around the corner.

We must also worry about other nation-states and their continued pursuit of biological weapons. Last year, the State Department reported that there were active biological weapons programs in Russia and North Korea, with China and Iran following by a close margin.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is unconscionable and unjustifiable. We stand with the citizens of Ukraine as they defend their country against these acts of aggression that have upended the global order in ways not seen since World War II.

By **TOM DASCHLE AND SUSAN BROOKS**

Chicago Tribune

Tom Daschle is a former Senate majority leader and Democratic senator from South Dakota. Susan Brooks is a former Republican U.S. representative from Indiana. They serve on the Bipartisan Commission on Biodefense.



Russia's incursion has not only increased the nuclear and chemical threat, but it has also greatly increased the threat of biological warfare. Russia seeks to obtain and control critical infrastructure throughout the region and could use biological weapons to attack the Ukrainian populace, leaving these laboratories and other critical infrastructure intact.

The situation is dire, but just as we cannot afford to focus on COVID-19 to the exclusion of all else, we cannot afford to focus on Russia to the exclusion of all others. Other nation-states and terrorist organizations are also producing or trying to obtain biological weapons.

To combat these numerous threats to our country's health and national security, our commission has recommended the establishment of an Apollo Program for Biodefense to coordinate government research and development and invest in science and technology to help eliminate pandemics in 10 years. We were glad to see that the president's recent budget request for fiscal year 2023 echoed these recommendations by calling for \$88.2 billion in new funding to prepare for pandemics and enhance America's ability to rapidly produce and deliver medical countermeasures against biological threats. It specifically addresses 10 priorities from our Apollo Program report. This is the kind of transformational investment we need to safeguard our country against future catastrophes, and we urge Congress to implement it as swiftly as possible.

All Americans have felt the consequences of one devastating biological event caused by COVID-19, and many are now affected by a second caused by avian influenza. We simply cannot fall into a cycle of complacency, moving on to the next crisis when one ends.

As former lawmakers, we have seen this happen too many times before. We must learn lessons and ensure past mistakes are not repeated. Our national biodefense must be robust enough to meet and defeat the array of biological threats bearing down on us—both here at home and around the world.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Did Sweden beat the pandemic by refusing to lock down? No, its record is disastrous

Throughout much of the pandemic, Sweden has stood out for its ostensibly successful effort to beat COVID-19 while avoiding the harsh lockdowns and social distancing rules imposed on residents of other developed nations.

Swedish residents were able to enjoy themselves at bars and restaurants, their schools remained open, and somehow their economy thrived and they remained healthy. So say their fans, especially on the anti-lockdown right.

A new study by European scientific researchers buries all those claims in the ground. Published in *Nature*, the study paints a devastating picture of Swedish policies and their effects.

“The Swedish response to this pandemic,” the researchers report, “was unique and characterized by a morally, ethically, and scientifically questionable laissez-faire approach.”

The lead author of the report, epidemiologist Nele Brusselaers, is associated with the prestigious Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm; her collaborators are affiliated with research institutes in Sweden, Norway and Belgium.

The details of Swedish policies as described by Brusselaers and her co-authors are horrifying. The Swedish government, they report, deliberately tried to use children to spread COVID-19 and denied care to seniors and those suffering from other conditions.

The government’s goal appeared geared to produce herd immunity—a level of infection that would create a natural barrier to the pandemic’s spread without inconveniencing middle- and upper-class citizens; the government never set forth that goal publicly, but internal government emails unearthed by the Swedish press revealed that herd immunity was the strategy behind closed doors.

Explicit or not, the effort failed. “Projected ‘natural herd-immunity’ levels are still nowhere in sight,” the researchers wrote, adding that herd immunity “does not seem within reach without widespread vaccinations” and “may be unlikely” under any circumstances.

That’s a reproach to the signers of the Great Barrington Declaration, a widely criticized white paper endorsing the quest for herd immunity and co-written by Martin Kulldorf, a Sweden-born Harvard professor who has explicitly defended his native country’s policies.

The country’s treatment of the elderly and patients with co-morbidities such as obesity was especially appalling.

“Many elderly people were administered morphine instead of oxygen despite available supplies, effectively ending their lives,” the researchers wrote. “Potentially life-saving treatment was withheld without medical examination, and without informing the patient or his/her family or asking permission.”

In densely populated Stockholm, triage rules stated that patients with co-morbidities were not to be admitted to intensive care units, on grounds that they were “unlikely to recover,” the researchers

wrote, citing Swedish health strategy documents and statistics from research studies indicating that ICU admissions were biased against older patients.

These policies were crafted by a small, insular group of government officials who not only failed to consult with experts in public health, but ridiculed expert opinion and circled the wagons to defend Anders Tegnell, the government epidemiologist who reigned as the architect of the country’s approach, against mounting criticism.

The bottom line is that Swedes suffered grievously from Tegnell’s policies. According to the authoritative Johns Hopkins pandemic tracker, while its total death rate from February 2020 into last week, 1,790 per million population, is better than that of the U.S. (2,939), Britain (2,420) and France (2,107), it’s worse than that of Germany (1,539), Canada (984) and Japan (220).

More tellingly, it’s much worse than the rate of its Nordic neighbors Denmark (961), Norway (428) and Finland (538), all of which took a tougher anti-pandemic approach.

Anti-lockdown advocates continue to laud Sweden’s approach even today, despite the hard, cold statistics documenting its failure.

The right-wing economic commentator Stephen Moore, a reliably wrong pundit on many topics, preened over Sweden’s death rate compared to other countries that imposed more stringent lockdowns: “Sweden appears to have achieved herd immunity much more swiftly and thoroughly than other nations,” Moore wrote.

Sadly, no.

According to Johns Hopkins, on Feb. 17, the day that Moore’s column appeared in the conservative Washington Examiner, Sweden’s seven-day average death rate from COVID was 5.25 per million residents.

That was better than the rate of 6.84 in the U.S., where lockdowns had been fading and had always been spotty, and in Denmark (5.65), but worse than France (3.97), Germany (2.23), Britain (2.23), Canada (2.03) and Norway (0.92).

Moore also declared, “What is clear today is that the Swedes saved their economy.”

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, of which Sweden is a member, isn’t quite so sanguine.

The OECD found that in terms of pandemic-driven economic contraction, Sweden did marginally better than Europe as a whole, but markedly worse than its Nordic neighbors Denmark, Norway and Finland, “despite the adoption of softer distancing measures, especially during the first COVID wave.” COVID-19, the OECD concludes, “hit the economy hard.”

The *Nature* authors show that Swedish government authorities denied or downplayed scientific findings about COVID that should have guided them to more reasoned and appropriate policies.

These included scientific findings that infected but asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic people could spread the virus, that it was air-

By **MICHAEL HILTZIK**

Los Angeles Times

Michael Hiltzik is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.



borne, that the virus was a greater health threat than the flu and that children were not immune.

The Swedish policymakers “denied or downgraded the fact that children could be infectious, develop severe disease, or drive the spread of the infection in the population,” the *Nature* authors observe. At the same time, they found, the authorities’ “internal emails indicate their aim to use children to spread the infection in society.”

So the government refused to counsel the wearing of masks or social distancing or to sponsor more testing—at least at first. One fact that tends to be glossed over by anti-lockdown advocates is that Sweden did eventually tighten its social distancing regulations and advisories, though only after the failure of its initial policies became clear.

At first, in early March when other European countries went into strict lockdowns, Sweden only banned public gatherings of 500. Within weeks, it reduced the ceiling to 50 attendees. The state allowed no distance learning in schools at first, but later permitted it for older pupils and university students.

In June 2020, Tegnell himself acknowledged on Swedish radio that the country’s death rate was too high. “There is quite obviously a potential for improvement in what we have done in Sweden,” he said, though he backtracked somewhat during a news conference after the radio interview aired.

And in December 2020, King Carl XVI Gustaf shocked the country by taking a public stand against the government’s approach: “I think we have failed,” he said. “We have a large number who have died and that is terrible.”

He was correct. If Sweden had Norway’s death rate, it would have suffered only 4,429 deaths from COVID-19 during the pandemic, instead of more than 18,500.

What may be especially damaged by the experience is Sweden’s image as a liberal society. The pandemic exposed numerous fault lines within its society—notably young versus old, natives versus immigrants.

The lesson of the Swedish experience should be heeded by its fans here in the U.S. and in other lands. Sweden sacrificed its seniors to the pandemic and used its schoolchildren as guinea pigs. Its government plied its people with lies about COVID-19 and even tried to smear its critics.

Do we really want all of America to face the same disaster?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

God is not sleeping

So it seems like nothing is Ralph’s fault. It’s everyone’s fault but his. He’s the savior of the CNMI!

A true leader is someone who is willing to stand up and take responsibility for any and all accusations. You know you did it, so man up and be the man you claim to be. You’re supposed to be the face of integrity that shines for the people of the CNMI!

What happened to the kid with the big dreams for his people and his home? The Ralph I met impressed me. He was well-mannered and respectful. And fairly intelligent as well.

I don’t know how you’re able to make this everyone’s fault but yours. *Tai haga I matamu!* No blood in your eyes! Sorry, folks, but I have a problem spelling words in Chamorro. I speak a little bit but I’d like to be able to spell it as well.

Man up, Ralph! Be the man you claim to be! Dude, you could’ve been the best leader the CNMI ever had but you chose greed and power. Quit now before you totally embarrass yourself in the upcoming election!

I can’t believe Vinnie is on your ticket. I had a lot of pride for him but I’m not so sure anymore! *Ti ma maigu si yu’us!* God is not sleeping!

Michael Geisinger
Guam

National Poetry Month

The following *senryu* are three-line poems focused on human nature as opposed to haiku, which focus on the natural world. They have been put into single lines to save space. Each individual *senryu* line is separated by a comma.

Ukraine on My Brain - Headline Senryu

Some headline *senryus*, Kyiv and Bucha, in today’s news
Armies of Putin, still murdering and shootin’, Kyiv people leave
Russian soldiers left, potato vodka bottles, empty and bereft
Burned tanks today, Molotov cocktails thrown, fire works its way
Boozing and bombing, bottles before and after, leave no laughter
Putin’s spring rain falls, fire flies from the sky, Mariupol massacre
Into Ukraine, Western donations flow, Putin’s army on the go
Across Ukraine, too many dead, many footprints in the snow
Sunflower painting, St. Michael’s* flag above, Ukraine bleeds
Putin’s bloody stain, only dead explain, Ukraine on my brain.

**The flag of Kyiv shows the patron saint of Kyiv, Archangel Michael, holding a flaming sword in his right hand and an oval shield with a cross on it in his left.*

A short poem now by a living Irish American poet. Kay Ryan

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY ‘PEPE BATBON’ CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.








was U.S. Poet Laureate from 2008 to 2010. She is the first openly gay female poet laureate. She taught in community colleges for many years. Ryan has won many awards, fellowships and prizes, including a National Humanities Award from President Barack Obama and a Pulitzer Prize for Poetry on April 18, 2011.

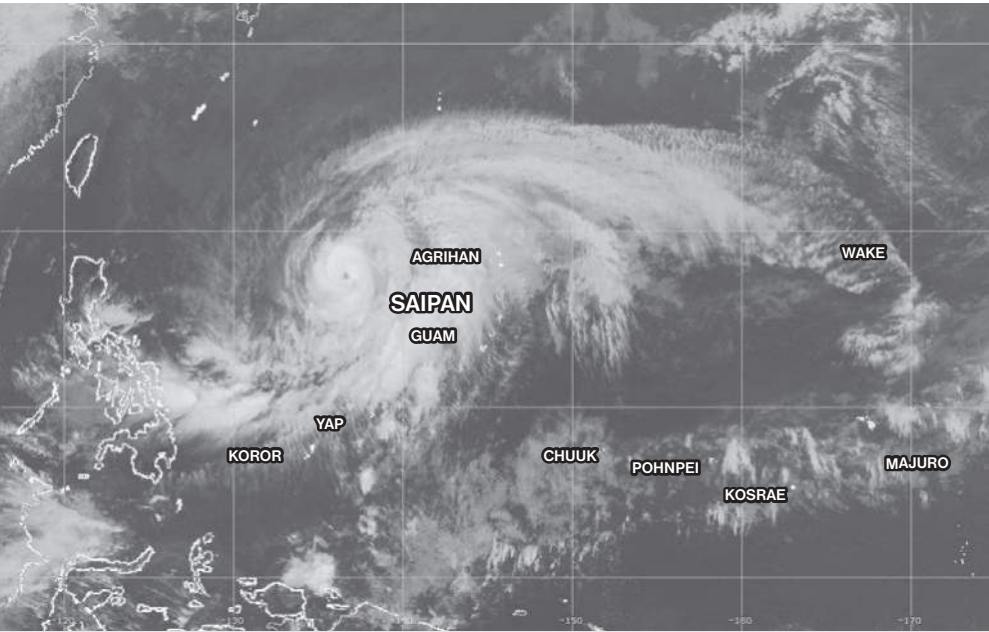
Crocodile Tears

The one sincere crocodile
has gone dry eyed for years
why bother crying
crocodile tears.

“Crocodile tears” is a false, insincere display of emotion such as a hypocrite crying fake tears of grief. The phrase derives from an ancient belief that crocodiles shed tears while consuming their prey, and as such is present in many modern languages.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly sunny, with scattered showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy, South southeast wind 11 to 16 mph.		Partly sunny,		Mostly cloudy		Mostly sunny, with isolated showers.	
84°	77°	85°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 9:48 AM, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows almost no showers within the Marianas Waters. It does show the convergent band east of Typhoon Malakas far to the west. The buoys reveal combined seas of around 10 feet, composed of a 7 to 9 foot west swell and a 5 foot east swell, plus some wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

onds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	PM Thunderstorms	30 / 25 °F	
Palau	Thunderstorms	28 / 25 °F	
Yap	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F	
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	28 / 25 °F	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	28 / 26 °F	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:03 AM	18:31 PM
Friday	06:03 AM	18:31 PM
Saturday	06:02 AM	18:31 PM
Sunday	06:01 AM	18:31 PM
Monday	06:01 AM	18:31 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	04:13 PM	16:17PM
Friday	-	04:52 PM	17:10 PM
Saturday	-	05:31 PM	18:05 PM
Sunday	-	06:12 PM	19:02 PM
Monday	-	06:56 PM	20:02 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	19 / 11 °F	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	21 / 8 °F	
Hong Kong	Sunny	28 / 22 °F	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	28 / 22 °F	
London	Mostly Cloudy	28 / 8 °F	
Los Angeles	Sunny	21 / 12 °F	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	33 / 25 °F	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	25 / 15 °F	
Miami	PM Showers	27 / 23 °F	
New York	PM Thunderstorms	27 / 11 °F	
Osaka	Rain	22 / 15 °F	
Paris	AM Fog/PM Sun	22 / 10 °F	
Busan	AM Light Rain/Wind	15 / 11 °F	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	23 / 10 °F	
Salem	Scattered Thunderstorms	23 / 12 °F	
San Francisco	Showers	14 / 11 °F	
Seoul	Cloudy	17 / 7 °F	
Tokyo	Rain	14 / 10 °F	
Washington, DC	PM Thunderstorms	26 / 9 °F	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
06:27 AM	High Tide	1.86	
12:28 PM	Low Tide	0.78	
6:00 PM	High Tide	1.75	
-	Low Tide	-	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 28, 2022				
DEPARTURES				
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				
UA117	6:40AM	7:20AM	1, 3, 5	
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	2, 4, 6, 7	
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				
PR 111	6:35AM	8:35AM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7	
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau	
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily	
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				
UA117/183	6:40AM	9:10PM	1, 3, 5 via Guam	
UA117/193	6:40AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau	
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	2, 4, 6, 7 via Guam	
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				
RS112	3:15PM	7:00PM	3, 6	
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7	
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	6	
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	3	
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6	
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				
7C3451	2:00PM	5:20PM	3, 7	

ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA116	5:00AM	5:45AM	1, 3, 5
UA116	8:00AM	8:45AM	6, 7
UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	2, 4
MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
R110	10:35PM	4:35AM+1	2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:05AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA184/116	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 7 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	8:46am+1	6 via Guam
INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
RS111	8:15AM	1:35PM	3, 6
7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
7C3406	8:50AM	2:30PM	3
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3452	8:00AM	1:00PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily	1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily	1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily				
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily	1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily	1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily	1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri Daily	TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
ROTA TO GUAM				2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

UOG to host job fair on April 27

Soon-to-be graduates as well as University of Guam alumni and jobseekers in the general public are invited to an in-person job fair—the Career Development Office’s annual Fañomnåkan (Spring) Job Fair—from 9am to 2pm on Wednesday, April 27, in the Calvo Field House.

“With graduation and summer just around the corner, we hope that this event will provide many opportunities for our students, alumni, and others looking for employment,” said Sallie McDonald, program coordinator of the UOG Career Development Office.

The job fair will provide a venue for jobseekers to meet and connect with employers in person and learn more about their available job and internship openings. Participants should dress professionally, be prepared for on-the-spot interviews, and bring multiple hard copies of their résumé and cover letter.

The growing list of participating employers includes:

- DZSP 21 LLC
- Guam Temps Inc.
- Dusit Thani Guam Resort
- Bank of Guam
- Hilton Guam Resort & Spa
- Crowne Plaza
- Jamaican Grill
- Holiday Resort
- Garden Villa
- Alupang Beach Resort
- Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility
- Guam Department of Education
- Geo-Engineering & Testing Inc.

Register to attend at url.uog.edu/2022-job-fair.

For more information, contact Sallie L.T. McDonald at (671) 735-2233 or career.development@triton.uog.edu. (PR)



LENTEN CELEBRATION

As part of Mount Carmel School's Lenten celebration, the entire Mount Carmel School family gathered in the school's quad on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, to pray the Stations of the Cross. Each grade level took turns reading each station and participated later in activities that highlighted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.



Mount Carmel School kindergarten student Yzabella Fernando Vergel de Dios reads “The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death” during the Stations of the Cross.



Mount Carmel School second-grade student Scott Jonathan Yasui Muna reads “The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother” during the Stations of the Cross.



Mount Carmel School students position themselves with candles during “The Tenth Station: Jesus’ Clothes are Taken Away” during the Stations of the Cross.



Mount Carmel School students position themselves with candles during “The Thirteenth Station: The Body of Jesus is Taken Down From the Cross” during the Stations of the Cross.

Chamorro talk show to spotlight Bantalan

Juan C. Reyes will be talking about the history of the Sugar Dock Bantalan this Saturday, April 16, 2022, starting at 10am, during the Chamorro Cultural Talk Show segment of the Marianas Agupa’ Talk Show on Magic 100.3FM.

Reyes’ topic, called “I Istorian Bantalan,” is made possible by the Inetnun Kutturán Natibun Marianas/Kkooor Aramasal Marianas, a non-profit organization in the CNMI. Association president Isidoro T. Cabrera said this community project aims to celebrate and recognize cultural experts and encourage public interactions in humanities-related topics, including culture, tradition, history, language, traditional healing practices, local names of places in the CNMI, music, among others.

The talk show will be every other Saturday starting at 10am. Cultural experts will be presenting in Chamorro followed by a Q&A call-in, chat, from the public and via social media.

The public is also encouraged to participate in a survey after each talk show to help the association improve the show and identify future shows and cultural experts. If more than 20 people respond, four prizes will be awarded from a randomly selected group of respondents within two weeks after each show. Details about the survey will be provided during the talk show and posted on the Marianas Agupa’ Talk Show Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Marianas-Agupa-Show-278884342457682> or <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5heKROsqcSVH-g5ztadbDHA>.

Here is the SurveyMonkey link for the April 16, 2022 Talk Show: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T5GR6V6>

This project was made possible, in part, by support from the Northern Marianas Humanities Council, a non-profit, private corporation funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the American Rescue Plan and the NEH Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan initiative.

Listen live on Marianas Agupa’ Show on KWA Magic 100.3 FM and streaming on the Internet via Tunein Radio, YouTube and Facebook. (PR)

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AMENDED
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2022

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an estimated \$1,514,000.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of \$970,416.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); \$463,940.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, \$79,644.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2022.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention and rapid re-housing activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning February 03, 2022

You may also obtain the application online at www.nmhc.gov.net in the section titled “Public Notice/Announcement” subsection “Community Planning Development”

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by **May 04, 2022, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after May 04, 2022, will not be accepted.**

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows:

March 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan
March 15, 2022, March 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
March 17, 2022, March 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
March 16, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota
March 21, 2022, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor’s Office Conference Room in Tatchog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Business

US, allies aim to force Russia to shift funds away from war

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States and its allies are pushing ahead with sanctions aimed at forcing Vladimir Putin to spend Russia's money propping up its economy rather than sustaining its "war machine" for the fight in Ukraine, a top Treasury Department official said Tuesday.

Deputy Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo, one of the main U.S. coordinators on the Russian sanctions strategy, said in an interview with The Associated Press that the goal is to make Russia "less able to project power in the future."

On the same day that inflation notched its steepest increase in decades, Adeyemo said reducing supply chain backlogs and managing the pandemic are key to bringing

down soaring prices that he related to the ongoing land war in Ukraine, which has contributed to rising energy costs.

"Let's be clear that the increase in energy prices was caused by President Putin's invasion, and we're going to continue to see volatility in those markets as long as President Putin continues his illegitimate invasion of Ukraine," he said. He added that the Biden administration was "committed to doing everything we can to lower the cost of energy for the American people."

As Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's No. 2, Adeyemo is tasked with developing a sanctions strategy that many economists have equated to economic warfare with Russia. He's also leading Treasury's

efforts to rebuild the American economy from the pandemic with equity at the fore.

Adeyemo discussed the next steps the U.S. and its allies will take to inflict financial pain on Russia—and the complications the war has on rising costs to Americans back home.

The U.S. and its allies will next target the supply chains that contribute to the construction of Russia's war machine, Adeyemo said, which includes "everything from looking at ways to go after the military devices that have been built to use not only in Ukraine, but to project power elsewhere."

"What that means practically is that with less money, Russia will have less money to invest in their military," he said.

Bird flu found at 2nd Indiana duck farm

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Avian influenza has been detected in a second northern Indiana duck farm, state officials said Tuesday.

Laboratory testing of a second commercial duck flock in Elkhart County came back as presumptively positive for the virus, the Indiana State Board of Animal Health said. The samples are being verified at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Iowa.

The duck flock has an esti-

mated 6,000 birds, the Indiana agency said.

The animal health board in an announcement did not say whether the ducks would be destroyed, as happened with six turkey farms in southern Indiana's Dubois and Greene counties. The board also did not disclose whether the birds at the first duck farm would be destroyed when it announced the detection of bird flu there last week.

Pending test results should indicate if it is the same strain of the virus that has been

found elsewhere and if it is highly pathogenic.

Animal Health Board staff have reached out to known poultry owners in the area to schedule testing of birds there, the board said.

So far this year, there have been cases of bird flu in 24 states affecting chickens, turkeys and ducks.

The agency said avian influenza does not present an immediate public health concern and no human cases of avian influenza viruses have been detected in the U.S.

Musk accused of breaking law in Twitter stock buy

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Elon Musk's huge Twitter investment took a new twist Tuesday with the filing of a lawsuit alleging that the colorful billionaire illegally delayed disclosing his stake in the social media company so he could buy more shares at lower prices.

The complaint in New York federal court accuses Musk of violating a regulatory deadline to reveal he had accumulated a stake of at least 5%. Instead, according to the complaint, Musk didn't disclose his position in Twitter until he'd almost doubled his stake to more than 9%. That strategy, the lawsuit alleges, hurt less wealthy investors who sold shares in the San Francisco company in the nearly two weeks before Musk acknowledged holding a major stake.

Musk's regulatory filings show that he bought a little more than 620,000 shares at

\$36.83 apiece on Jan. 31 and then continued to accumulate more shares on nearly every single trading day through April 1. Musk, best known as CEO of the electric car maker Tesla, held 73.1

million Twitter shares as of the most recent count Monday. That represents a 9.1% stake in Twitter.

The lawsuit alleges that by March 14, Musk's stake in Twitter had reached a 5% threshold that required him to publicly disclose his holdings under U.S. securities law by March 24. Musk didn't make the required disclosure until April 4.

That revelation caused Twitter's stock to soar 27% from its April 1 close to nearly \$50 by the end of April 4's trading, depriving investors who sold shares before Musk's improperly delayed disclo-

sure the chance to realize significant gains, according to the lawsuit filed on behalf of an investor named Marc Bain Rasella. Musk, meanwhile, was able to continue to buy shares that traded in prices ranging from \$37.69 to \$40.96.

The lawsuit is seeking to be certified as a class action representing Twitter shareholders who sold shares between March 24 and April 4, a process that could take a year or more.

Musk spent about \$2.6 billion on Twitter stock—a fraction of his estimated wealth of \$265 billion, the largest individual fortune in the world. In a regulatory filing Monday, Musk disclosed he may increase his stake after backing out of an agreement reached last week to join Twitter's board of directors.



Musk

Nation

Police hunt gunman who hurt 10 in Brooklyn subway attack



This photo provided by Will B Wylde, a person is aided in a subway car in the Brooklyn borough of New York, Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

AP

NEW YORK (AP)—Police hunted late into the night for the gunman who opened fire Tuesday on a subway train in Brooklyn, an attack that left 10 people wounded by gunfire and once again interrupted New York City's long journey to post-pandemic normalcy.

The search focused partly on a man who police say rented a van possibly connected to the violence.

Investigators stressed they weren't sure whether the man, Frank R. James, was responsible for the shooting. But authorities were examining social media videos in which the 62-year-old decried the United States as a

racist place awash in violence and sometimes railed against the city's mayor, Eric Adams.

"This nation was born in violence, it's kept alive by violence or the threat thereof and it's going to die a violent death. There's nothing going to stop that," James said in one video.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell called the posts "concerning" and officials tightened security for Adams.

The gunman sent off smoke grenades in a crowded subway car and then fired at least 33 shots with a 9 mm handgun, police said. Five gunshot victims were in critical condition but expected to survive.

At least a dozen people who escaped gunshot wounds were treated for smoke inhalation and other injuries.

One passenger, Jordan Javier, thought the first popping sound he heard was a book dropping. Then there was another pop, people started moving toward the front of the car, and he realized there was smoke, he said.

When the train pulled into the station, people ran out and were directed to another train across the platform. Passengers wept and prayed as they rode away from the scene, Javier said.

"I'm just grateful to be alive," he said.

Anxieties resurface as gunfire erupts on NYC subway

NEW YORK (AP)—As the year began, New Yorkers shuddered at a subway crime straight out of urban nightmares—the death of a woman shoved onto the tracks by a disturbed stranger. The city's new mayor vowed to "make sure New Yorkers feel safe in our subway system."

But commuters Tuesday morning faced an attack that evoked many riders' deepest fears. A rush-hour train car filled with smoke as it pulled into a Brooklyn station. Gunshots rang out—at least 33 of them—wounding at least 10 people.

Frightened riders fled, and so did the gunman, who remains at large.

Much is still unknown about the attack, including whether it was an act of terrorism. At a Tuesday evening press conference,

authorities said they were looking for Frank R. James, 62, who they say rented a van linked to the shooting.

It was a searing reminder of the city's unyielding battle with gun violence and the specter of terror-like attacks that hangs over New York City—particularly the subway system that is its transportation backbone.

Police and security officials have made many attempts to harden the city against such attacks, putting officers on trains and platforms, installing cameras and even doing rare spot checks for weapons on passengers entering some stations.

Yet the sprawling system, with its nearly 500 stations, largely remains like the city streets themselves: Too big to guard and too busy to completely secure.

In the hours after the shoot-

ing, with the gunman still on the loose, commuters like Julia Brown had little choice but to keep riding the rails.

"It's the only way to get home—other than the express bus and then another bus and then another bus," said Brown, who works in Manhattan. "I lived through 9/11. I lived through the blackout. You just have to be as safe as you can, and just be mindful around your environment."

Mayor Eric Adams vowed after Tuesday's mass shooting to keep fighting to make the system safe.

"We're going to double down on our patrol strength," the mayor told CBS News. Even before Tuesday's violence, the mayor had vowed to increase subway patrols and launch sweeps of subway stations and trains to remove homeless people using them as shelters.

Asia

Death toll from PH landslide and floods rise to at least 56



AP

In this handout photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard, residents are evacuated by rescuers in a flooded village in Panitan, Panay island, Philippines on Tuesday April 12, 2022.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—As search and rescue efforts increased with the arrival of equipment, the death toll has risen to at least 56, with 28 others missing, after a summer tropical depression that unleashed days of pounding rain caused landslides and floods in the central and southern Philippines, officials said Wednesday.

Nearly 200 villagers were injured mostly in the landslides in the hard-hit city of Baybay in central Leyte province over the weekend and early Monday, officials said.

Army, police and other rescuers were struggling with mud and unstable heaps of earth and debris to find the missing villagers.

More rescuers and heavy equipment, including backhoes, arrived in the landslide-hit villages in Baybay. Its mayor, Jose Carlos Cari, said the weather cleared Wednesday, allowing the search and rescue work to go full force.

"We're looking for so many more missing people," Cari said and added that authorities would do a recount to determine how many villagers

were really missing and believed buried in the landslides.

Forty-seven of the dead were recovered from the landslides that hit six Baybay villages, military and local officials said. Nine other people drowned elsewhere in floodwaters in four central and southern provinces, they said.

"We are saddened by this dreadful incident that caused an unfortunate loss of lives and destruction of properties," said army brigade commander Col. Noel Vestuir, who was helping oversee the search and rescue.

debt, including bonds and government-to-government borrowing, pending the completion of a loan restructuring program with the International Monetary Fund to deal with the island nation's worst economic crisis in decades, the government announced Tuesday. Sri Lankans in recent months have endured fuel and food shortages and daily power outages. Most of those items are paid for in hard currency, but Sri Lanka is on the brink of bankruptcy, saddled with dwindling foreign reserves and \$25 billion in foreign debt due for repayment over the next five years. Nearly \$7 billion is due this year. "Sri Lanka has had an unblemished record of external debt service since independence in 1948," the Ministry of Finance said in a statement. "Recent events, however, including the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fallout from the hostilities in Ukraine, have so eroded Sri Lanka's fiscal position that continued normal servicing of external public

debt obligations has become impossible."

Shanghai eases 2-week shutdown, letting some residents out

BEIJING (AP)—Some residents of Shanghai were allowed out of their homes as the city of 25 million eased a two-week-old shutdown Tuesday after a video posted online showed what was said to be people who ran out of food breaking into a supermarket. About 6.6 million people can go outdoors, but some must stay in their own neighborhoods, the online news outlet The Paper reported, citing city officials. The government said some markets and pharmacies would reopen. A health official warned Shanghai doesn't have the coronavirus under control despite easing restrictions. "The epidemic is in a period of rapid growth," said Lei Zhenlong of the National Health Commission at a news conference. "Community transmission has not been effectively contained."

World

AS RUSSIAN TROOPS MOUNT IN EAST Putin vows war will continue

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia vowed to continue its bloody offensive in Ukraine as the war neared its seventh week Wednesday, as President Vladimir Putin insisted the campaign was going as planned despite a major withdrawal and significant losses.

Thwarted in their push toward the capital, Kyiv, Russian troops focused on the eastern region of Donbas, where Ukraine said it was investigating a claim that a poisonous substance had been dropped on its troops. It was not clear what the substance might be, but Western officials warned that any use of chemical weapons by Russia would be a serious escalation of the already devastating war.

Russia invaded on Feb. 24 with the goal, according to Western officials, of taking Kyiv, toppling the government and installing a Moscow-friendly regime. In the six weeks since, the ground advance stalled and Russian forces lost potentially thousands of fighters and were accused of killing civilians

and other atrocities.

Putin said Tuesday that Moscow "had no other choice" and that the invasion aimed to protect people in parts of eastern Ukraine and to "ensure Russia's own security." He vowed it would "continue until its full completion and the fulfillment of the tasks that have been set."

For now, Putin's forces are gearing up for a major offensive in the Donbas, where Russian-allied separatists and Ukrainian forces have been fighting since 2014, and where Russia has recognized the separatists' claims of independence. Military strategists say Moscow believes local support, logistics and the terrain in the region favor its larger, better-armed military, potentially allowing Russia to finally turn the tide in its favor.

In Mariupol, a strategic port city in the Donbas, a Ukrainian regiment defending a steel mill alleged that a drone dropped a poisonous substance on the city. The assertion by the Azov Regiment, a far-right group now part of the Ukrainian mili-

tary, could not be independently verified. The regiment indicated there were no serious injuries.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that while experts try to determine what the substance might be, "The world must react now."

The claims came after a Russia-allied separatist official appeared to urge the use of chemical weapons, telling Russian state TV on Monday that separatist forces should seize the plant by first blocking all the exits. "And then we'll use chemical troops to smoke them out of there," the official, Eduard Basurin, said. He denied Tuesday that separatist forces had used chemical weapons in Mariupol.

Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Maliar said officials were investigating, and it was possible phosphorus munitions—which cause horrendous burns but are not classed as chemical weapons—had been used in Mariupol, which has been pummeled by weeks of Russian assaults.

UN: COVID plunged 77 million into poverty

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The pandemic plunged 77 million more people into extreme poverty last year and many developing countries can't recover because of the crippling cost of debt repayments -- and that was before the added impact of the war in Ukraine, a U.N. report said Tuesday.

The report said rich countries could support their recovery from pandemic slumps with record amounts borrowed at ultra-low interest rates. But the poorest countries spent billions of dollars servicing their debts and faced much higher borrowing costs, preventing them from spending on improving education and health care, protecting the environment and reducing inequality.

According to the U.N., 812 million people lived in extreme poverty—on \$1.90 a day or less -- in 2019, and by 2021 amid the pandemic

the number had risen to 889 million.

The report is on financing to achieve U.N. development goals for 2030, including ending poverty, ensuring quality education for all young people and achieving gender equality.

U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed said at a news conference that the effort "is coming at a critical moment for humanity, adding to the compounding crises of climate assaults on our natural systems and the protracted COVID-19 pandemic."

Added to this, she said, is the global impact of the war in Ukraine. A U.N. analysis indicates "1.7 billion people are faced with exposure to spiking food, energy and fertilizer costs as a result of the war in Ukraine," Mohammed said.

The report estimates that GDP per capita in 20% of developing countries will not

return to pre-2019 levels by the end of 2023, even before absorbing the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine.

It says the poorest developing countries, on average, pay 14% of their revenue for interest on their debts, with many forced to cut budgets for education, infrastructure and capital spending as a result of the pandemic. Rich developed countries pay only 3.5%, it says.

The war in Ukraine will exacerbate these challenges, the report said, and it will also bring higher energy and commodity prices, renewed supply chain disruptions, higher inflation, lower growth and increased volatility in financial markets.

Mohammed said "it would be a tragedy" if rich donor nations increased military expenditures as a result of the war and cut aid to developing countries and reduced efforts to address the climate crisis.

6 bodies found dumped on road in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The bodies of five men and one woman were found dumped on a roadside in Mexico's north-central state of Zacatecas, prosecutors said Tuesday.

State prosecutors said the

bodies were found in the rural township of Pinos. They did not provide a cause of death or possible motive in the killings.

The town is near the border with the neighboring state of San Luis Potosi,

and prosecutors said the victims could have been from that state.

But Zacatecas itself has been the scene of bloody turf battles between the Jalisco and Sinaloa drug cartels.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China's March exports grow despite virus; imports flat

BEIJING (AP)—China's exports rose 15.7% over a year ago in March while imports were flat amid disruption due to coronavirus outbreaks as the ruling Communist Party enforces a "zero-COVID" strategy to isolate every case. Exports rose to \$276.1 billion despite anti-virus controls in Shanghai and other industrial centers that are causing factories to reduce production, customs data showed Wednesday. Imports rose less than 1% to \$228.7 billion. China's infection numbers are relatively low, but the "zero-COVID" strategy has confined most of Shanghai's 25 million people to their homes since late March and suspended access to other manufacturing centers.

Sri Lanka halts debt repayment pending IMF bailout plan

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lanka is suspending its repayment of foreign

Environment

By IVA MAURIN
CORRESPONDENT

Mattresses, cans of used cooking oil, a '90s television—these are just some of the trash picked up last Saturday, April 9, at the MIHA wetland in Garapan.

Last Saturday, community volunteers—mainly from Grace Christian Academy National Honor Society—joined the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Public Works in cleaning up the wetland in Garapan as part of the Environmental Awareness Month celebration this April.

Wetlands are defined by the U.S. Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) as “areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil condition.”

Basically, this means wetlands are soil ecosystems typically covered with water enough to support vegetation.

EAM chairperson Angel Palacios told Saipan Tribune that the cleanup is being done not only to beautify the CNMI, but to keep the wetlands pristine.

“Think of the environment before you dispose or do any illegal dumping,” Palacios said. “We are doing a cleanup to beautify the CNMI, to keep our wetlands clean to preserve our endangered species. This is our island. [We need to] maintain our wetlands, keep it clean, make sure that they are doing what their purpose is, which is to clean runoff water and sediments.”

Just how important are wetlands? Here in the CNMI, and according to a study made for BECQ in 2019 by Wolfs Company, in collaboration with VU University Amsterdam and Brander Economics, the approximate economic value of wetlands is worth over \$10 million annually.

Wetlands retain sediment runoffs, helping surrounding areas get the much-needed buffer from flooding and erosion, especially during heavy rains. They also provide a source of water for communities, a habitat for fish and wildlife, and a place for recreation and for people to relax.

The CNMI hosts over 20

wetlands, the largest of which is Lake Susupe. The MIHA wetland, where the cleanup was held, is located in the midst of a government housing project.

Restoring the MIHA wetland

“This is an area where there is government housing for people in need. But the other thing is, this is a wetland. It is in the middle of Garapan, a lot of which is historically wetland, and this still is,” DFW wetland biologist James Herndon said, referring to the MIHA wetland.

“There’s a lot of people that live in this area. We can restore the wetland, so when there are major storm events, we can also retain more water so that it doesn’t flood the city itself. It’s important to clean it because there’s so much trash in this wetland that it’s actually affecting the hydrology—the flow of water—and that contributes to flooding,” he added.

The biologist also highlighted the proximity of the wetland to the ocean. “The more

contaminants there are in this wetland, the harder it is for the wetland to absorb them. Eventually, those contaminants [pollutants that come from all these trash] and the water does flow out to the ocean. We have a more direct line to the marine environment so protecting wetlands is good for our marine environment because it cleans the freshwater as it flows out to the ocean.”

Herndon is particularly interested in bringing back the Mariana Moorhens into the MIHA wetland, stressing that conservation and restoration efforts will be good for both people and wildlife.

‘Get involved’

Wetlands in the CNMI are under threat due to dumping and we can all do something to help.

Illegal dumping is the big-

gest environmental issue in the CNMI, according to CNMI Youth Congress vice speaker Liekeila’akata Iakopo, and she is appealing to all to make use of the solid waste management

facilities available—the transfer station in Lower Base and the landfill in Marpi—to properly dispose of trash.

“It’s definitely my belief that we cater to what we will be in our future, and starting in the environment is definitely a step to that kind of reality. With the evolving of modern times, I feel that our homeland is being neglected, in a sense because of all the trash you see that just lays around,” she said.

Iakopo was one of the youth volunteers who participated at the MIHA wetland cleanup, along with about 20 members of GCA’s National Honor Society.

“Because we have a lot of new businesses coming in, and industries, a lot of them contribute to more use of products or plastics. They end up on the streets or in our beautiful jungles and it’s very sad to see,” she said. “It’s important for young individuals like myself and others to get involved and branch out, and look online on what’s the next event for [activities] like this. It’s free. All you need to do is bring yourself and bring your passion for our islands and your love for the community.”

GCA National Honor Society president Joyce Liv Francisco echoes Iakopo’s sentiments on youth involvement, adding that young people like them should find opportunities to help better the community.

“It is a very rewarding and fulfilling experience. It helps instill a mindset that we should always take care of the place we live in,” Francisco said.



Environmental Awareness Month chair Angel Palacios of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality helps one of the volunteers load picked up trash into the truck for hauling to the landfill, during the MIHA Wetland cleanup activity last Saturday in Garapan.



Miso Sablan, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality environmental specialist and Environmental Awareness Month co-chair, carry out a piece of tin roof picked up from the MIHA wetland during the MIHA Wetland cleanup activity last Saturday in Garapan.

IVA MAURIN
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality environmental technician Tyler Flores secures cans of discarded used oil dumped illegally at the MIHA Wetland in Garapan, before loading them to the BECQ truck during the MIHA Wetland cleanup activity last Saturday in Garapan.



LARRY MAURIN
Youth Congress vice speaker Liekeila’akata Iakopo with a co-volunteer and Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality’s Mary Urena, during the MIHA Wetland cleanup activity last Saturday in Garapan.

CATHY SHAI
Volunteers and staff of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality and Division of Fish and Wildlife pose by a pile of tin roofs, among the last batch of trash picked up within the wetland during the cleanup last Saturday in Garapan.

Restoring the MIHA Wetland



Life & Style

Rihanna talks fashion, motherhood as due date approaches

NEW YORK (AP)—Time-keeping isn't Rihanna's strong suit, and that goes for the pregnancy she's been sharing with the world as well.

"Planning? I wouldn't say planning," she told *Vogue* about her upcoming motherhood. "But certainly not planning against it. I don't know when I ovulate or any of that type of (expletive). We just had fun. And then it was just there on the test."

Now in her third trimester, the music star, and fashion and beauty mogul hasn't exactly been hiding under a maternity tent since she and boyfriend A\$AP Rocky announced they were expecting in late January via a wintry



Rihanna, left, and A\$AP Rocky appear at the Off-White Ready To Wear Fall/Winter 2022-2023 fashion collection, in Paris on Feb. 28, 2022.

New York street photo shoot. Since, she's made the fashion week rounds in Milan and Paris wearing a range of belly-bearing couture.

If it's not something she would have put on pre-pregnancy, Rihanna said, it's not something on her list now.

"My body is doing incredible things right now, and I'm not going to be ashamed of that," she said. "This time should feel celebratory. Because why should you be hiding your pregnancy?"

The cover interview, out Tuesday, has 34-year-old Rihanna in a lacy red Alaïa bodysuit and long gloves. It's just one of the numerous rule-breaking designer looks she's been wearing in celebration of her bump.

So how is she feeling about the next part, where she actually gives birth and scheduling possibly kicks in?

Rihanna wishes all of her closest loved ones could be in the room, but that seems unlikely under COVID-19 rules. She didn't disclose where she'll be headed for labor and delivery—or when she's due for that matter.

"Maybe I'll just have a party bus parked outside or something," she said. And what frightens her the most? "Post-partum depression. Will I feel out of control emotionally? Those are the stories I hear from other women that scare me."

Hawaii couple drop restraining order against Ezra Miller

HONOLULU (AP)—A Hawaii couple have dropped their petition for a temporary restraining order against actor Ezra Miller, who is known for playing "The Flash" in "Justice League" films and allegedly harassed patrons of a karaoke bar in a Big Island town last month.

According to court documents, a judge dismissed the restraining order case Mon-

day after the couple requested it.

William Dean, a lawyer who represents the couple, declined comment Tuesday on why his clients no longer want to pursue the petition that accused Miller of bursting into their bedroom and threatening them in Hilo, the same



Miller

town where Miller was arrested.

A judge had granted the restraining order petition, saying it was needed to prevent future harassment and had set a hearing for Wednesday. It's unclear if the hearing will be held now that the case is dismissed.

A judge on Tuesday granted a request by Miller's lawyer, Francis Alcain, to postpone a hearing on a separate case involving an alleged traffic violation for Miller in Hilo until April 26 because Miller and prosecutors are in what Alcain described as "pre-negotiations" for an agreement on the two outstanding cases. Alcain did not disclose details of the

potential agreement. A hearing for the arrest case is also scheduled for April 26.

In the traffic case against Miller, police were called to a dispute in downtown Hilo on March 19, where Miller was "uncooperative and refused to leave the area and continued to obstruct the sidewalk," Hawaii Police Department Assistant Chief Kenneth Quiocho said Tuesday. Miller was cited for obstructing a highway, Qui-

ocho said.

On March 27, police police were called to Margarita Village in Hilo, where they said Miller yelled obscenities, grabbed a mic from a singing woman and lunged at a man playing darts.

Miller was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and harassment.

The day after Miller was released on \$500 bail, the couple filed a petition for a temporary restraining order.

Lawyer: Depp trial likely to become mudslinging soap opera

FAIRFAX, Va. (AP)—A trial over libel allegations by Johnny Depp against his ex-wife, Amber Heard, will likely turn into a six-week, mudslinging soap opera, Heard's lawyers warned a Virginia jury Tuesday.

"You're going to see who the real Johnny Depp is—behind the fame, behind the pirate costumes," Heard lawyer J. Benjamin Rottenborn told the jury during opening statements in

the civil trial. "Because Johnny Depp brought this case, all of this is going to come out."

Depp sued Heard for libel in Fairfax County Circuit Court after she wrote an op-ed piece in *The Washington Post* in 2018 referring to herself as a "public figure representing domestic abuse."

Depp says the article indirectly defames him by referring to abuse allegations Heard

made back in 2016. Depp denies abusing her.

In Tuesday's opening statements, Rottenborn said the evidence will show that Depp physically and sexually assaulted Heard on multiple occasions. But he told jurors that they don't need to make themselves referees of the couple's turbulent marriage if they focus on the basics of libel law.

He argued that Heard was exercising her First Amendment rights as an advocate when she wrote the article, which focused largely on the broad topic of domestic violence.

He also said the 2018 article did nothing to damage Depp's reputation. He noted that the abuse accusations had been public for two years already, and he said Depp's spiraling career was the result of his

drinking and drug-using, which made him an unreliable commodity to Hollywood studios.

"This man's poor choices have brought him to this point," he said. "Stop blaming other people for your own self-created problems."

More than anything, though, he pointed out that the article in question never even mentions Depp's name.

Depp's lawyer, Benjamin Chew, acknowledged that Depp's name never appears in the piece.

"It didn't have to," Chew told the jury. "Everyone in Hollywood knew exactly what she was talking about."

Depp's team argues that the article is an example of "defamation by implication." In the December 2018 piece, Heard wrote that "two years ago, I became a public figure representing domestic abuse, and I felt the full force of our culture's wrath for women who speak out."

Accepting grandma irked by intolerance of others

DEAR ABBY: My adult granddaughter, "Kaia," is in a relationship with "Jenny." Jenny's stepmom doesn't believe in gay marriage or homosexuality. I'm having a hard time dealing with the fact that Jenny's family doesn't accept Kaia or allow her in their home. Kaia is excluded from all holidays and family functions.

I don't know what to do or say to her about this. They are getting married in two months, and Jenny's family is still shunning her. How do I deal with these "holy rollers" who use the church as a reason to hate my granddaughter? I don't want to die knowing she'll have a miserable life ahead of her. Please help me.

SUPPORTIVE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SUPPORTIVE: If Jenny's family are truly good Christians, they may not dislike your granddaughter. They may be following a misguided directive to love the "sinner" but hate the "sin."

I cannot advise strongly enough that Kaia and Jenny discuss the ramifications of that family's stance BEFORE they marry. I am surprised Jenny would attend family gatherings from which Kaia is excluded. If this continues after the marriage, it could damage their relationship. A counselor at the nearest LGBTQ center would be helpful

in facilitating this discussion.

Be as supportive to your granddaughter and Jenny as you can so they know you're always in their corner. Encourage them to cultivate their own "chosen family" as they move into their future.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Jonah," comes from a large family. They are rude people who live in a small, rural town, and they don't like outsiders. Jonah and I have been together 15 years (married for eight), and I have never been invited to his mother's home or some of his siblings' homes.

We love to entertain, so they attend our holiday parties, where they literally walk in without greeting me. They eat all our food and leave without saying goodbye or even helping with the cleanup. It's "pack behavior." They do this all together.

I have reached the point that I no longer want to host these events. I feel uncomfortable in my own home. Jonah and I have started cutting back on the number of parties we host, and now they are making rude comments about it. My husband acknowledges that they're a bunch of miserable, rude people, but that doesn't help the situation.

I don't want anything to do with them, and I don't want to be forced to keep inviting a bunch of ungrateful individuals who

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



don't have even the common courtesy to speak to me. How can I make Jonah understand how I feel? Please help.

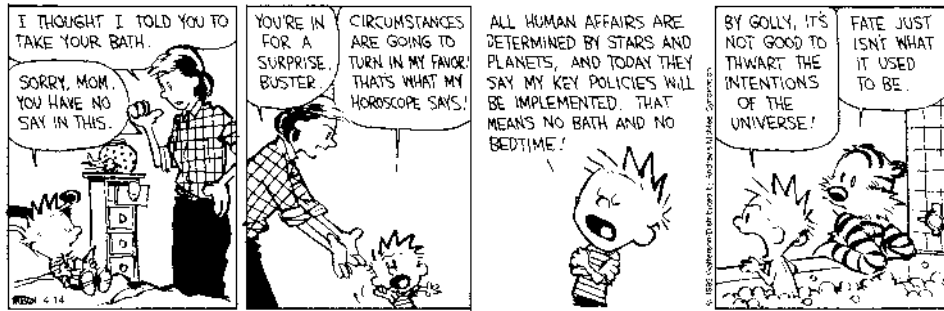
ANNOYED IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR ANNOYED: If you have expressed to your husband what you have written in your letter, he DOES understand, but doesn't want to acknowledge it. The way his family has treated you is deplorable. If you don't wish to entertain them, let your husband buy and prepare the food and do the cleanup with no help from them afterward, while you go and do something alone or with people whose company you enjoy. He can also visit his relatives without you if he wishes.

Pastimes

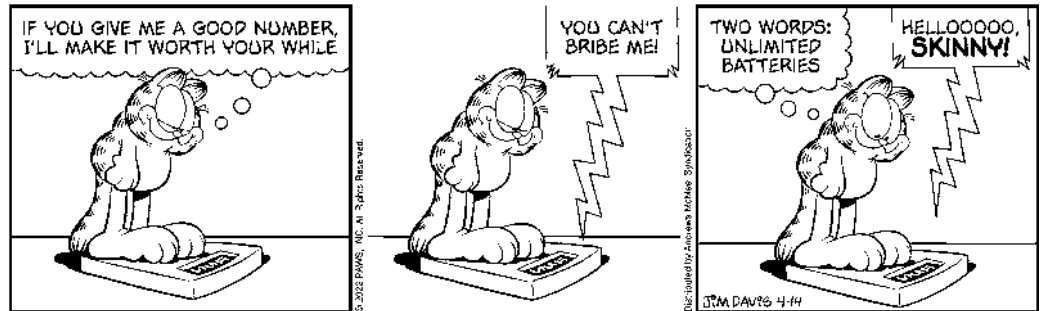
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Floating ice mass
5 Naturalist John
9 Moreover
12 Anti-oxidant berry
13 Actress Hathaway
14 Old Oldsmobile
15 Astronaut Neil
17 Calendar abbr.
18 Building managers
19 Rep
21 Roman
22 Casaba, e.g.
24 Scottish slope
27 —
28 Frisbee, e.g.
31 Duo's pronoun
32 Chit
33 Consumed
34 Bullets
36 Hosp. areas
37 Hitch

DOWN

38 Aromas
40 Yours truly
41 Birthday mail
43 Diminutive
47 Actress MacGraw
48 Truce
51 Street, in Montreal
52 Variety
53 GPS suggestions
54 Evening hrs.
55 Book after Joel
56 Luke's teacher
1 Sheepish remarks
2 Beige
3 Wheelchair access
4 Model Bündchen
5 Red planet
6 Half of dos
7 Hostel
8 Majestic
9 Native of Yerevan
10 Inert gas
11 Terse warning
16 Part of TNT
20 Pantheon member
22 Ties up, as a boat
23 Flightless birds
24 Fluffy scarf
25 Mojito ingredient
26 Military depots
27 French perfume brand
29 Depot (Abbr.)
30 Beer barrel
35 Quirky
37 Gate tender
39 Tennis great
40 Pas' mates
41 Kvetch
42 Grad
43 Auction actions
44 One of the Jackson 5
45 Scored 100 on
46 Small plateau
49 Crater edge
50 6 on a phone

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-14

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Abigail Breslin, 26; Sarah Michelle Gellar, 45; Anton Tanner, 47; Brad Garrett, 62.

Happy Birthday: Your ingenuity can help you overcome obstacles this year. Think outside the box, be innovative and be willing to do things differently. Channel your energy into something that will bring high rewards and the most satisfaction. Don't settle for less when directing your effort and discipline will help you transcend your expectations. Give your all and you'll get what you deserve. Your numbers are 2, 13, 19, 28, 32, 36, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Plug away until you reach your destination. Your tenacity will be unbeatable, giving you the edge you need to get things done your way. Don't hold back when you have so much to gain. Seize the moment; put your plans in motion. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take nothing for granted. Question anyone who makes ambiguous promises. A hidden agenda regarding sensitive situations is likely. Proceed with caution, be realistic and make a change only if you have control of the outcome. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Ignore what's happening around you, and take care of your obligations. What you manage to accomplish is essential to maintaining your position, reputation and status. Live up to your word, and put your energy where it counts. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A positive domestic change will lift your spirits. Do your best to add comfort and tranquility to your environment and to surround yourself

with the people who put a smile on your face. Incorporate what makes you happy into your everyday routine. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be specific when dealing with friends, relatives and colleagues. Don't underestimate what someone can do, and share only information you feel is necessary. A disciplined attitude and physical push will help you turn your plan into a reality. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Step outside your comfort zone and expand your mind. New ideas will help you bring about positive change. Embrace what life has to offer, and put your heart and soul into something that moves you emotionally, spiritually or physically. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Recognize your power and put it to the test. Focus on your pursuits. Rearrange your space to suit your needs and encourage your success. Don't fold under pressure or give in to someone who refuses to meet you halfway. ****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Watch what others do, and choose to up your game. Use your imagination, and it will stir up some options that can help you outmaneuver someone trying to take over or hustle you. Personal improvement will turn out better than anticipated. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Show discipline and resolve when dealing with indulgent or manipulative people. Focus on what's important to you, and stick to people who are just as proactive as you. What you accomplish will set the tone for what's to come. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Good fortune is heading your way if you invest in what you have and what you want. Discuss your plans with someone you respect, and make a change that improves your lifestyle and encourages you to lower debt and ease stress. *****



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Be careful where you leave your money or possessions. Someone will be eager to talk you into something you don't need. Focus on what you have in place, not making unnecessary costly changes. Hard work will bring the best return. ***



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Juggle things around so you can fit everything you want to do into your day. When dealing with sensitive issues, a diplomatic approach will help you skirt a debate. A little charm will go a long way. Romance is in the stars. ***
Birthday Baby: You are intuitive, emotional and resourceful. You are persistent and charismatic.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

3		9			7						
					9		2	5	8		
6							7	1			
	3								4	1	
9	4									2	
		9	2								6
		1	8	6		3					
				5			1				4

Difficulty Level ★★★

4/14

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	3	1	2	5	4	8	7	9
4	5	9	1	8	7	6	2	3
7	8	2	3	6	9	1	4	5
9	2	4	7	1	5	3	6	8
1	7	8	4	3	6	5	9	2
5	6	3	8	9	2	7	1	4
2	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	1
3	9	6	5	4	1	2	8	7
8	1	7	9	2	3	4	5	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

RUBBER GLOVES

Solution: 10 letters

G P A O S C I T E H T N Y S L
S A N I T A R Y M E D I C A L
C I R A S D B O X E S K I F N
I N I A E S P R O T E C T E O
E T P C G L P O E L A I L T I
N S L I R E C R R F F S A Y T
T G A T I S I E O M D N C H C
I N N S P L D O O L E F I A U
S I T A E W R O O H L C M N R
T G I L O P R H C U K A E D T
S A N P R H E T I T T B H S S
L K G E T S I D F C C D C A N
E C T A U K S C L E A R O L O
L A B O R A T O R Y R O L O C
W P H O S P I T A L A E M N R

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4/14

Bathroom, Boxes, Chemical, Clean, Clear, Color, Construction, Doctor, Facial, Floor, Fluids, Food, Garage, Grip, Hands, Hospital, Household, Kitchen, Laboratory, Meal, Medical, Outdoor, Packaging, Paint, Planting, Plastic, Powder, Protect, Safety, Salon, Sanitary, Scientists, Sick, Soap, Spas, Sterile, Synthetic, Thick, Waterproof

Yesterday's Answer: Crystal

The NEW Treasury 48 can be purchased online at
www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Edwards, Russell carry Wolves past Clippers in play-in game



MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Anthony Edwards and D'Angelo Russell came through with a steady stream of clutch makes. Patrick Beverley supplied the intensity in an emotional triumph over his former team.

The Minnesota Timberwolves proved they belong in the playoffs, and that rare air for this franchise is just where they're headed.

Edwards and Russell combined for 59 points to help the Timberwolves overcome a rough night for Karl-Anthony Towns and beat the Los Angeles Clippers 109-104 in a play-in game on Tuesday night.

"The game had to go in a different direction," coach Chris Finch said. "That's why you have a team, because a lot of other people step up."

Edwards scored 30 points with five 3-pointers and Russell had 29 points and six assists to send the Wolves to the No. 7 seed in the Western Conference and a first-round matchup with Memphis.

"Just utilizing what we have," Russell said. "We've got a lot of pieces that complement each other."

Paul George finished with 34 points after shooting 2 for 10 in the first half for the Clippers, who have a second chance to make the playoffs with a home game on Friday for the No. 8 seed against either New Orleans or San Antonio.

Reggie Jackson (17 points) and Norman Powell (16 points) did their part in stretches, but the Clippers failed to create enough separation when the Timberwolves were sputtering through most of the first half.

Towns had only 11 points on 3-for-11 shooting and fouled out midway through the fourth quarter, but his sidekicks were more than up to the challenge.

"I took what the game gave me. That's what they gave me. They were scared to guard me, and I took advantage of that," Edwards said.

Jackson's 3-pointer gave the Clippers their largest lead of the game at 93-83 with 8:54 remaining, but about 4 minutes later Russell knocked down the go-ahead 3-pointer for a 97-95 advantage the Wolves never relinquished. He saluted the crowd for the punctuation.

Edwards followed with a tomahawk dunk after blowing by Powell at the top of the key.

"I'm one of the best defensive guys on earth, and no one can guard him," said Beverley, who was in tears during the spirited celebration afterward as Edwards hopped up on the scorer's table.

The fans were fired up for this fast-paced, fast-improving team that's headed to the playoffs for the second time in 17



Minnesota Timberwolves guard D'Angelo Russell (0) loses control of the ball while Los Angeles Clippers forward Norman Powell (24) defends during the first quarter during an NBA basketball game Tuesday, April 12, 2022, in Minneapolis.

years, but the buzz wore off a bit in the third quarter while George found his groove with a smooth 15 points.

Then Towns fouled out with 7:34 to go, less than 2 minutes after he had just checked back in.

"They played a lot better without KAT on the floor," Clippers coach Tyronn Lue said. "They got into us defensively. They switched on a lot more stuff. I just didn't think we made the right plays."

The Clippers had success disrupting Towns during the

regular season when they won three of the four matchups, losing only in January when George was out, and they spared no energy attacking the two-time All-Star center from every which way. Nicolas Batum was his primary tormentor, but most of the Clippers had a hand in it.

Towns failed to make a basket in the first half for the first time in more than three years, an 0-for-7 clunker. His only points came on a pair of free throws, and he flashed a sarcastic smile and pumped his first after getting that call.

Nets 115, Cavaliers 108

In New York, bring on Boston.

That's the next stop on a recent rise for the Brooklyn Nets, who were in 10th place not long ago but don't look like an underdog right now.

Kyrie Irving had 34 points and 12 assists, Kevin Durant added 25 points and 11 assists, and the Nets took the No. 7 seed in the Eastern Conference by beating the Cleveland Cavaliers 115-108 on Tuesday night in the play-in opener.

The Nets raced to a 20-point lead after one quarter and

turned the Cavaliers away time and again to earn a matchup with No. 2 seed Boston in a series that begins Sunday.

"I know that team very well and they know us very well and it'll be a back and forth," said Irving, a former Celtics guard, "and once you throw that ball in the air, you're going to really see some spectacular basketball."

Irving made his first 12 shots before a 3-pointer rimmed out in the fourth quarter. He finished 12 for 15.

A preseason NBA Finals favorite who sputtered through a turbulent season and were

in 10th place entering the last week of the regular season, the Nets have run off five straight wins. With Durant and Irving, they are far more dangerous than the usual No. 7 seed.

And both are willing to give the ball to teammates who are capitalizing when they get it. Bruce Brown had 18 points, nine rebounds and eight assists, while Andre Drummond scored 16 points.

Brown, who is from Boston, talked about how they can keep doing that against a Celtics team missing defensive anchor Robert Williams. Durant was aggravated when he heard that.

"It ain't going to be that easy, I'm going to tell you that," Durant said.

Unless the Nets play like they did in the first quarter.

The Nets made nearly 71% of their shots in the period — Irving and Durant combined to make all eight of theirs — and closed the period with a 15-3 spurt that made it 40-20. It was a bigger lead than Brooklyn had in any first quarter during the regular season.

"You can't give a team like Brooklyn that has championship aspirations and players who have won championships a 22-point lead," Cavs coach J.B. Bickerstaff said. "Again, give our guys credit for getting back in it. But that's damn near impossible to overcome."

Darius Garland scored 34 points for the Cavaliers, who have another chance to earn the No. 8 seed. They will host the winner of the Atlanta-Charlotte game on Friday, with the winner moving on to face No. 1 seed Miami.

Analysis: On the NBA MVP race, and its international flavor

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

The votes are in. Over the coming days and weeks, the NBA will announce the various award-winners for this regular season. And while nobody knows with absolute certainty where any of the trophies are going yet, this much is known: The MVP is going to be an international player.

Again.

Prepare for history, because it's coming. The consensus seems to be that this season's MVP will be either Nikola Jokic, Joel Embiid or Giannis Antetokounmpo. Jokic is from Serbia. Embiid from Cameroon. Antetokounmpo from Greece, with ties to Nigeria. When the winner is revealed, it'll be the fourth consecutive season in which the MVP won't have been born in the U.S.—something that has never happened.

Nor has this: If Jokic, Embiid and Antetokounmpo finish 1-2-3 in the voting, in whatever order, it'll mark the first time in NBA history that

the top three MVP vote-getters are foreign players.

Jokic is the reigning MVP and made a brilliant case this season. Averages of 27 points, 14 rebounds and just under eight assists per game are crazy numbers. Nobody has ever finished a season with those averages, which only further strengthens the arguments for Jokic to go back-to-back.

"I know I'm very biased. I admit that wholeheartedly," Denver coach Michael Malone said. "The MVP isn't even a competition. I mean, there's other great players. I'm not saying they're not great players. But what Nikola Jokic has done this year, with this team, with everything we've had to go through, is incredible. He was good last year. He's even better this year."

Embiid won the scoring title, averaging 30.6 points and almost 12 rebounds. Throw in the four assists per game, and Embiid finished with averages that nobody has had since Bob McAdoo in 1975-76.

"I don't do a lot of cam-

paingn," Philadelphia coach Doc Rivers said. "Joel has campaigned enough with his play."

Antetokounmpo's final numbers in a season in which Milwaukee is defending the NBA championship were 29.9 points, 11.6 rebounds and 5.8 assists per game. The numbers are eerily similar—right down to his 55.3% field goal rate—to Antetokounmpo's MVP season two years ago. And in terms of per-game averages, nobody has averaged that many points, rebounds and assists since Wilt Chamberlain in 1965-66.

"He sets the tone for everything," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

The international flavor of the NBA isn't so much of a flavor anymore. It's not a sprinkle, not a garnish. It's a very real—and highly talented—segment of the NBA player population, with the MVP leaders and Dallas' Luka Doncic among those deservedly carrying the superstar banner into these playoffs that

start with play-in games Tuesday and then in earnest with first-round games beginning Saturday.

Only Stephen Curry, who finished third last season, stopped the Jokic-Embiid-Antetokounmpo 1-2-3 finish in the MVP race a year ago. This year, nobody figures to have a real chance to break up the trio. FanDuel Sportsbook says Jokic is the heavy favorite, with Embiid and Antetokounmpo the only others with a realistic chance. After that: the fourth choice is Devin Booker of the Phoenix Suns, at 100-1.

It wasn't an easy choice. Most of the award choices weren't this season. The panel of 100 sportswriters and broadcasters who cover the league and did the voting probably won't be in unanimous agreement on anything. And serious arguments can be made in many cases, particularly defensive player of the year and the All-Defensive team, quite possibly the most subjective of all the categories.

Coach of the year has a slew

of candidates. Rookie of the year got muddled toward the end of the season. The All-NBA team will be a circus, especially since Embiid and Jokic are both centers and one of them will either not make the first team or make the first team as a forward. Either way, that's a travesty. The NBA still insists on choosing an All-NBA team by position — two guards, two forwards, one center—in a league that has largely gone positionless.

But the MVP is the big one, obviously.

If the definition is player most valuable to his team, then it almost has to be Jokic. Without Jamal Murray and Michael Porter Jr., the Nuggets still made the playoffs because their center can do just about everything and do it all better than just about everyone else.

If the definition is player that was most dominant, the argument shifts toward Embiid. When he was at his best this season, he couldn't be guarded.

Albert Pujols homers as Cardinals beat Royals, 6-5



ST. LOUIS (AP)—Albert Pujols homered

for the first time since returning to St. Louis and Andrew Knizner hit a three-run shot, helping the Cardinals beat the Kansas City Royals 6-5 on Tuesday night.

Nolan Arenado also went deep for St. Louis, which has won 20 of 27 interleague games against the in-state Royals since 2017.

Salvador Perez homered twice and Michael A. Taylor also connected for Kansas City, which has allowed 33 runs in losing its last three games. Daniel Lynch (0-1) allowed six runs in five innings.

The 42-year-old Pujols, who also singled twice in a 3-for-4 performance, signed with St. Louis on March 28 for his final season. The star slugger played for the Cardinals from 2001-11, helping them win two World Series.

Jordan Hicks (1-0) picked up the win with two innings of hitless relief.

Giants 13, Padres 2

In San Francisco, Alyssa Nakken made major league history as the first female coach on the field in a regular-season game, and San Francisco pounded San Diego.

The 31-year-old Nakken entered in the third inning after first base coach Antoan Richardson got ejected. When she was announced as Richardson's replacement, Nakken was greeted with a warm ovation from the crowd. She also received a congratulatory handshake from Padres first baseman Eric Hosmer.

Nakken is an assistant coach who works heavily with baserunning and outfield defense. She normally watches games from an indoor batting cage near the steps to the dugout.

Brandon Belt hit a two-run homer to highlight a six-run first inning off Yu Darvish (0-1), and it was 10-1 in the second. That was plenty for Alex Cobb (1-0), who struck out 10 to win his San Francisco debut.

Joc Pederson homered for the first time since joining the Giants. He and Wilmer Flores went deep in the eighth after Padres outfielder Wil Myers moved to the mound to pitch.

Yankees 4, Blue Jays 0

In New York, Aaron Hicks hit a two-run homer and made jumping catch in his first left-field start in four years, leading the Yankees to the victory.

New York scored first for the first time in five games this season when Hicks drove a 2-0 slider from Yusei Kikuchi (0-1) into the right-center field seats in the second inning.

Nestor Cortes and four relievers combined on a five-hitter, quieting a Blue Jays offense that produced 23 runs and 38 hits in the first four



St. Louis Cardinals' Andrew Knizner (7) is congratulated by teammates Albert Pujols and Tommy Edman (19) after hitting a three-run home run during the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals Tuesday, April 12, 2022, in St. Louis.

games. Clay Holmes (1-0) got the win.

Kikuchi, making his Blue Jays debut after signing a \$36 million, three-year deal contract, gave up three runs — two earned — and five hits in 3 1/3 innings.

Rays 9, Athletics 8, 10 innings

In St. Petersburg, Fla., Manuel Margot hit a game-ending single during Tampa Bay's two-run 10th inning.

Wander Franco started the Tampa Bay 10th with an RBI double off Lou Trivino (0-1). Josh Lowe was walked intentionally with two out, and Margot then lined his clutch hit down the left-field line.

Billy McKinney's leadoff single off Ryan Thompson (1-0) in the 10th put Oakland ahead 8-7.

Ji-Man Choi, Brandon Lowe and Brett Phillips homered for the Rays, who improved to 4-1.

The A's got a homer from Jed Lowrie. Oakland had won two in a row.

Braves 16, Nationals 4

In Atlanta, Marcell Ozuna homered twice for Atlanta, and Ozzie Albies drove in three runs.

Coming off an 11-2 loss, the Braves began the game with a .201 team batting average before banging out 19 hits and going 9 for 19 with runners in scoring position.

Ozuna, Austin Riley, Adam Duvall, Dansby Swanson and Orlando Arcia each had two RBIs. Bryce Elder (1-0), a fifth-round draft pick out of the University of Texas in 2020, won his major league debut.

Washington's Patrick Corbin (0-2) gave up six runs and nine hits in 2 2/3 innings.

Atlanta has won 15 of 21 against Washington since the start of last season.

Rockies 4, Rangers 1

In Arlington, Texas, Kris Bryant

got his first two RBIs in a Colorado uniform and the Rockies stretched their winning streak to four games.

Bryant hit a go-ahead RBI double in the third inning that made it 2-1, and a sacrifice fly in the seventh. Five games into a \$182 million, seven-year contract, Bryant is batting .350 (7 of 20) with hits in every game. But the four-time All-Star hadn't driven in a run until his double down the right-field line off Martin Perez (0-1) right after Charlie Blackmon's RBI single.

Jhoulys Chacin (2-0) pitched 2 2/3 scoreless innings, and Daniel Bard earned his second save in three chances.

Indians 10, Reds 5

In Cincinnati, José Ramírez hit a grand slam and drove in six runs, remarkable rookie Steven Kwan reached base three more times, and Cleveland spoiled Cincinnati's home opener.

Andrés Giménez hit a tie-breaking two-run homer in the ninth inning off Hunter Strickland (0-1). Ramírez, who tripled and singled earlier, capped a six-run burst with his third career slam, connecting against Daniel Duarte for a 10-4 lead.

Kwan has now reached base at least three times in all five games of his major league career. The 24-year-old outfielder kept up his super start with a single, two walks and a sacrifice fly.

Trevor Stephan (1-0) pitched one scoreless inning for the win.

Cubs 2, Pirates 1

In Pittsburgh, Seiya Suzuki homered twice, Drew Smyly pitched five scoreless innings and the Cubs spoiled the Pirates' home opener.

Suzuki connected for lead-off shots in the fifth and seventh. One of the top players in Japan, Suzuki signed an \$85 million, five-year contract with

the Cubs last month.

Smyly (1-0) permitted three hits and walked none in his Cubs debut. The left-hander agreed to a one-year contract last month.

The Pirates got their only run on Bryan Reynolds' homer against Mychal Givens in the eighth.

David Robertson worked a perfect ninth for his second save.

José Quintana (0-1) made his first appearance for Pittsburgh, pitching five effective innings against one of his former teams.

Mets 2, Phillies 0

In Philadelphia, Tylor Megill delivered his second straight scoreless start for the Mets, and Brandon Nimmo homered.

Francisco Lindor had an RBI single for the Mets, who recovered from blowing a four-run lead in the eighth inning against Philadelphia on Monday night to snap a two-game skid.

Megill (2-0), who got a spot in the rotation only when two-time NL Cy Young Award winner Jacob deGrom was sidelined by a shoulder problem in spring training, again looked like an ace for 5 1/3 innings.

After throwing five shutout innings to win on opening day at Washington, Megill out-pitched Zack Wheeler (0-1).

Edwin Díaz struck out three in the ninth for his first save in the combined five-hitter.

White Sox 3, Mariners 2

In Chicago, Luis Robert hit his first homer of the season, a tie-breaking drive in the sixth inning that led the White Sox to their third consecutive victory.

Robert connected against Matt Brash (0-1), a 23-year-old right-hander making his major league debut.

Seattle lost its third straight game after starting with two wins. The Mariners have

scored 10 runs: only Baltimore (six) and Milwaukee (nine) began the night with fewer.

Seattle was 1 for 8 with runners in scoring position, getting an RBI single from Jesse Winker with two outs in the ninth off Liam Hendriks, who struck out Mitch Haniger for his first save. The Mariners are hitting .156 (7 for 45) with runners in scoring position this season.

Reynaldo López (1-0) pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings for the win in Chicago's home opener.

Brewers 5, Orioles 4

In Baltimore, Andrew McCutchen hit a tiebreaking single in the seventh inning, Devin Williams pitched out of his own jam in the eighth, and Milwaukee held on for the win.

Cedric Mullins hit a grand slam for Baltimore.

McCutchen had three RBIs, and Willy Adames scored three runs for the Brewers. Hoby Milner (1-0) earned his first big league win, and Josh Hader got his second save.

Félix Bautista (0-1) allowed a one-out double by Adames in the seventh. Cionel Pérez retired Christian Yelich on a grounder before McCutchen's sharp single put Milwaukee ahead.

Red Sox 5, Tigers 3

In Detroit, Rafael Devers had three hits and two RBIs, helping the Red Sox rally for the win.

Kiké Hernández doubled twice for Boston, which trailed 3-0 after five innings. Garrett Whitlock (1-0) pitched four hitless innings to win in his first appearance since the Red Sox announced his \$18.75 million, four-year contract on Sunday.

Devers' tiebreaking RBI single gave the Red Sox a 4-3 lead in the eighth.

Boston, which has not been above .500, improved to 2-3.

Detroit's Spencer Torkelson, the top pick of the 2020 ama-

teur draft, doubled in the third inning for his first big league hit after an 0-for-10 start. Alex Lange (0-1) got the loss.

Angels 4, Marlins 3

In Anaheim, Calif., pinch-runner Tyler Wade slid home when Marlins shortstop Miguel Rojas bobbled Max Stassi's grounder in the ninth inning, and the Angels swept a two-game interleague series with Miami.

Anthony Rendon hit a two-run homer and Jack Mayfield had an RBI triple for the Angels, who went 3-3 on their season-opening homestand. Closer Raisel Iglesias (1-0) got the win.

Jazz Chisholm hit a tying two-run homer in the seventh for Miami, and Jesús Luzardo had a career-high 12 strikeouts over five sharp innings.

The Marlins dropped four of five on their season-opening California road trip. Anthony Bender (0-1) was charged with the loss.

Astros 2, Diamondbacks 1

In Phoenix, Michael Brantley delivered a go-ahead single in the ninth inning, and Jose Siri hit a homer and a key double that helped Houston edge Arizona.

The game was tied at 1 in the ninth when the Astros pieced together a two-out rally against Mark Melancon (0-1) started by Siri's hustle double into right-center. Jose Altuve walked and Brantley drove in Siri with a single, his third hit of the game.

Hector Neris (1-0) pitched a scoreless eighth and Ryan Pressly earned his third save, working around a leadoff single in the ninth.

Siri, batting ninth, hit a 456-foot homer in the fifth. Christian Walker went deep for the Diamondbacks in the sixth.

Dodgers 7, Twins 2

In Minneapolis, Trea Turner and the Los Angeles Dodgers broke open a tie game with a six-run eighth inning, then waited out the rain to take their series opener against Minnesota.

Turner, who made an error earlier that led to Minnesota's tying run, hit an RBI single that gave the Dodgers a 2-1 lead. Justin Turner added another RBI single, and Will Smith doubled in two runs to give Los Angeles a 5-1 cushion.

Both teams then sat through an 88-minute rain delay that halted play in the bottom of the eighth with the Dodgers ahead 7-1. The game resumed at 11:31 p.m. with only a few dozen fans in the stands.

Daniel Hudson (1-0) pitched a scoreless seventh. Emilio Pagan (0-1) took the loss.

Chris Archer tossed four scoreless innings in his Twins debut.

Manta Rays 1 rallies against Geckos 2 in HS boys v-ball

By MARK RABAGO

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Saipan Southern High School 1 rebounded from a first set loss to turn back Saipan International School 2 in three sets as the Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 season continued last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The last game of a full schedule at the jam-packed venue couldn't be more edge-of-your-seat exciting as the Geckos took control of the game early by nipping a slow-starting Manta Ray crew in the opening set, 21-18.

Fortunately for SSSH coach Shawn Davis, her boys calmed down and played better in the second set by controlling the service game and blocking almost everything near the net. With the Manta Rays finally waking up and beating SIS 2, 21-13, the game went into a third and deciding set.

It was more of the same in the rubber set, as the Manta Rays continued to pound the ball in the net against the smaller but quicker Geckos. Emanuel Fera and Dylan Lee did most the damage

with their blocks, while the rest of the team did a lot of scrambling in covering the shots the two 6-foot seniors failed to thwart. Set and game for SSSH, 15-11.

Aside from Lee and Fera, the rest of the SSSH 1 team is made up of Tommy Jin, Vu Arachchige, Ron Patricio, Vince Guilas, JiaHao Chen, Tyler Andrew, Frankie Satur, Gino Andon, Joshua Garcia, Lerry Marquez, and Franz Abadilla.

Davis said her Manta Ray 1 team has nowhere to go but up following their comeback behind win against SIS 2, the team's second in six matches. The loss kept SIS 2 winless after three games.

"Half the team are freshman but there's a lot of potential. A lot of them are new and they're just learning the game in this level and I'm having them rotate and switch and play the middle and cover. So, they kind of had a cold start against SIS 2, but they eventually warmed up. What we're working on is we're doing different components of the game. First, we started with defense and blocking and then coverage. We've just now started on hitting because my first focus is defense, defense, de-



A Saipan Southern High School 1 towers over Saipan International School 2 blockers as he spikes the ball during their Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 season game last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

MARK RABAGO

fense. We're now putting everything together," she said.

The longtime volleyball

coach said even though they lost to powerhouse teams Grace Christian Academy

and MHS earlier, the game against the former had them going through another cold

start and the one with MHS was stretched to three sets.

"We've faced some of the toughest teams so we're hoping to bring together all the different parts that I'm teaching them and work together as a unit," she said.

In other games, GCA and Mt. Carmel School 1 remained perfect. The Eagles earlier clobbered SSSH, 21-14, 22-20, to improve to 5-0. MCS 1 is half a game ahead of GCA after beating sister team MCS 2, 21-14, 21-11, and also sweeping Kagman High School, 21-9, 21-16, to up its record to 6-0. MCS 2 dropped to 2-3, while KHS leveled its win-loss card to 3-3.

MHS 1 kept pace with the league-leaders following a 21-10, 21-17 victory over winless MHS 3. The Dolphins 1 now carries a 5-1 record, while Dolphins 3 continued swimming against the tide at 0-5. MHS 2 bagged its third win in five starts following a 21-15, 21-10 win over SSSH 2, which is now 0-6. SSSH 2 earlier dropped 15-21, 10-21 decision against MHS 2.

The Public School System Boys High School Volleyball League 2021-2022 is being held with help from the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association.

Tinian scores back-to-back wins in co-ed elementary caging



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A Tinian Elementary School player is fouled attempting a shot in the IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League 2021-2022 last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tinian Elementary School made their cross channel plane ride worthwhile after beating two Saipan teams as the IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League 2021-2022 returned last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Going up against Garapan Elementary School 2, the galloping Colts were mired in quicksand in the first half and

led by only 1 point, 9-8. TES, however, were quicker out of the gates at the start of the second and limited the Mallards to just 3 points, while scoring 10 points themselves to win the game running away, 19-11.

Kymani Nabors led TES with 8 points, while Treven Evangelista fired 7 markers of his own for the Colts.

The Colts were more impressive in their win against San Vicente Elementary School 1. Not only did they

punctured the hoops with 27 points against the Canaries, TES also didn't allow SVES to score a single point en route to the 27-0 shellacking. Braiden Iglecias-Santos scored 8 points to lead TES, who also got 4 points each from four different players.

In other results last Saturday, Kagman Elementary School beat SVES 2, 19-10; Oleai Elementary School wiped the floor clean of Brilliant Star School, 30-4; Ko-

blerville Elementary School drubbed SVES 1, 16-2; KobES 1 thumped GES 1, 40-3; William S. Reyes Elementary School defeated GES 1, 24-10; GES 2 got by BSS, 25-2; KobES 1 triumphed over KagES, 27-11; and KagES nipped WSRES in a low-scoring affair, 8-6.

The IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League 2021-2022 season is being organized by the Public School System Athletic Program with help from the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation.

LADY

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3 points. The Lady Manta Rays came in with a time of 8:59.010 which earned them 1 point.

The Lady Ayuyus include Ha'ani Rodgers, Kysha Kileman, Ellaine Blas, Mariessa Babauta, Lisa Agulto, Nadja Norita, Maria Castro, Joan Tomokane, Joina Gildilak,

Rayanalyn Cabrera, Carmella Ranu, Wallis Bai, and Megan Barnes.

KHS teams "finally improved this Saturday with the women's team and KHS coed 500-meter team going undefeated in every 500m race," said KHS coach Jason Tar-kong in an interview.

KHS co-ed team won first place in the 500m race with a time of 3:37.870 and collected

5 points. SSSH came in second with a time of 3:56.860 that gave them 3 points, and MHS came in last with a time of 4:01.600 for 1 point.

"The past few weekends the three participating high schools showed their game faces. The competition is still close and all teams improved their skill level in the competition. SSSH came out strong this year. Both men and

women's teams showed their strength on all the sprints conducted the first two weeks," said Tarkong.

For the boys 1,000m race, SSSH won with a time of 6:40.900 that gave them 5 points. KHS came in second with a time of 6:58.500 for 3 points, and MHS took 1 point for their last place time of 8:25.010.

In an interview with SSSH coach Joseph Weaver about

the performance of his teams, he said, "Southern paddlers performed pretty well last Saturday, but I know our team is capable of performing at a higher level. Half the women paddlers were feeling under the weather and we were trying different lineups in the boat. We were also trying different lineups with the boys this race so everyone could participate. In the 1,000m sprint it was just

the right combination of boys that took the win. It should be an exciting championship on April 23rd and it's really up to the team who wants it the most. All teams are putting in overtime until the big one. The Manta Rays will be ready, guaranteed!"

The next race day of the PSS Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2021-2022 will be held on April 23, 2022.

SOCCER

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while Hopwood was also unbeaten in Pool B, downing Chacha and Tinian to move to the playoffs.

Meanwhile, Marianas

High School-1, Saipan Southern High School, SIS, and Mt. Carmel School made up the girls high school semis cast.

The Lady Dolphins won Pool A with their perfect record in three games and are

highly favored in their semis duel against Pool B second finisher MCS Lady Knights on April 22. Mt. Carmel had an even 1-1 record in pool play, prevailing over Tinian and losing against the SIS Lady Geckos

MHS-1 bagged win No. 3 after outclassing Saipan Southern last Tuesday, 2-0. Tamia Hix and Paulynn Joyce delivered the two goals for the Lady Dolphins.

In the other semis tiff, SIS will go into the playoffs with

its 2-0-0 win-draw-loss record, while the SSSH Lady Rays ended pool play with a 2-0-1 mark, downing Kagman High School and MHS-2, before bowing to MHS-1.

The Kagman Lady Ayuyus played in the final pool match

in the division last Tuesday and finished the season on a winning note after shutting down MHS-2, 5-0. Pia Nge-wakl paced Kagman with her four goals, while Sheira Dela Rosa hit the other goal for the Lady Ayuyus.



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Lady Ayuyus sweep 500m, 1,000m races

LEIGH GASES

The Kagman High School girls outrigger canoe team in action during the Public School System Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2021-2022 last Saturday in the waters off Killili Beach in Susupe.



By LEIGH GASES
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Kagman High School ruled the girls 500m and 1,000m race of the Public School System Inter-scholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2021-2022 last Saturday in the waters off Kilili Beach in Susupe.

The Lady Ayuyus raced past their competitors faster than the rain could make its way down and finished first place in the one-lap race with a time of 3:33.210. That win was worth 5 points for Kagman.

The Lady Ayuyus also paddled as hard and as fast as they could in the two-lap 1,000m race to win first place with a time of 8:34.250. That win was worth 5 points as well.

In the first race last March 19, KHS came in first place as well and second place in the race last March 26. For the 1,000m, the Lady Ayuy-

us came in second, then on March 26 came in third, until finally, claimed the first place win last Saturday.

Saipan Southern High School came in second in the 500m race with a time of 3:40.290, which garnered them 3 points and Marianas High School came in last with a time of 3:59.870 which gave them 1 point.

In the 1,000m race, the Lady Dolphins redeemed themselves and earned the second place spot with a time of 8:53.750 which gave them

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NMSA Sports Banquet set for April 19

The Northern Marianas Sports Association will recognize athletes and officials for their achievements in 2021 at the NMSA Annual Sports Banquet scheduled for April 19 at the Kensington Hall of Kensington Hotel Saipan.

The NMSA will honor the Male and Female Student Athletes of the Year, Male and Female Athletes of the Year, Team of the Year, Coach of the Year, and Administrator

of the Year. The association will also fete the monthly winners under the athletes and team categories, while NMSA's Hall of Fame Screening Committee will announce the new inductees into the NMI Sports Hall of Fame.

"We are excited to welcome our athletes, coaches, guests, and other members of the NMI sports community to the NMSA Annual Sports Banquet. We

know the challenges we've been going through in the last two years due to the pandemic, but our athletes and officials are doing their best to return to training and competitions and work on getting their respective sports to the next

level. The NMSA recognizes these efforts and we would like to honor and thank them for their commitment to their



Interscholastic Soccer League semis set

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



The girls middle and high school divisions of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Soccer League are down to four teams each and will have their semi matches next weekend at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Chacha Oceanview Middle School took the last semis seat in the middle school division following a 4-0 victory over Tinian in the Pool B game last Saturday. Justidy Mizutani scored two goals, while Marv Amog and Destiny Cabanayan contributed one apiece to bring Chacha to the semis round and join Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, Hopwood Middle School, and Saipan International School in next weekend's playoffs.

Chacha will challenge Pool A top finisher FMS in the

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas High School-1's Tyana Hix, left, blocks Saipan Southern High School's Summer Manahane to prevent her from going after the ball during their game in the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Soccer League last Tuesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

semis game on April 22, while SIS will take on Hopwood in the other Final Four pairing. Winners of next Friday's

games will advance to the finals, which will be played on April 23, starting at 9am.

The FMS Napu riders de-

feated SIS and Saipan Community School in Pool A games to reach the semis,

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